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FORTY-FIVE VOLUMES

VOL. XXIX.

NEW YORK
THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY
MDCCCXCVII

Imperial Edition

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No. 212

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JOSÉ MARIA DE PEREDA

(1834–)

BY WILLIAM HENRY BISHOP

Pereda was born February 7th, 1834, at Polanco, a village of Northern Spain, near Santander, the capital city of the province of the same name, popularly termed also La Montaña, or the Mountain. This is the region to which he has especially devoted himself in his literary work. He is generously named by the younger men of distinguished ability, like Galdós and Valdés, as the most original of the contemporary Spanish writers of fiction, and as the most revolutionary, in the sense of having cast off the conventional influence of the romantic and classical traditions of the earlier half of the century. His influence is a distinct and valuable element in the work of the other leaders; and yet, unlike them,—owing to the local raciness, the idiomatic difficulties of his style,—he has been scarcely translated into any other of the modern languages, and into English not at all; except in some fugitive short stories, rendered for the periodical press by Mr. Rollo Ogden. Pereda is properly to be named as the pioneer and standard-bearer of the best kind of modern realism in Spain.

He is a country gentleman of good descent and liberal means, resident, at no great distance from Santander, at the village of Polanco, where his modern villa adjoins the *casa solar* or ancestral homestead of his family, with the arms heavily carved above the door in mediæval fashion. He has never had to know the conflict between poverty and literary aspiration, which is so common a feature in the history of writers; yet this has in no way detracted from the masculine vigor, the evidence of assiduous labor, and the notable air of conscientiousness, in his work. In appearance he is of the spare ascetic type we are accustomed to associate with the Spanish hidalgo. The distinguished French traveler and novelist, René Bazin, in an account in the Revue des Deux Mondes of a visit to him at Polanco, says: «As he drew near, one might have taken him for Cervantes himself.» Galdós speaks of him as «the most amiable, the most excellent of men.» He seems to have in a high degree the faculty of inspiring warm personal regard. This is well exemplified in two most laudatory essays on two of his books,—the one by Galdós, the other by Menendez y Pelayo, the eminent critic. Frankly colored as these are by friendly admiration, they yet state convincingly the reasons for their opinions; and these reasons can be accurately verified by whoever will have recourse to the text.

Pereda's literary work began in 1859 with the publication, in a local journal, of the sketches of manners and customs afterwards gathered into a volume called ‹Escenas Montañeses› (Scenes in Montaña). A number of these are marked by the triviality of their origin; but several others, like ‹La Leva› (The Conscription) and ‹El Fin de Una Raza› (The Last of his Race), are esteemed equal to the best of his later work. ‹La Leva› is a picture, both touching and humorous, of the poor fisherman Tuerto — an Adam Bede of a rougher sort — and his drunken wife. The naval conscription finally takes him out of his misery, but leaves his children to the mercies of a cold world. The second story is in a measure a continuation of the first, showing the return of Tuerto to find his children vagrants and outcasts; but it is chiefly devoted to Uncle Tremontorio, an old-school tar of a type that has now disappeared. The province of Santander is an almost equal combination of the mountains belonging to the Cantabrian chain, and the coasts of the formidable Bay of Biscay: both are affectionately referred to in the literary phraseology as Cantabria, from the old Roman name of the province. Pereda divides his interest impartially between sea and shore; between the life of the farmers in the hilly interior and that of the hardy fisherman on the coast; and notably Santander, with its tall squalid tenement houses clustering round the park, which is the capital and the centre of all the enterprises of these latter. This is the domain which the author has chosen so exclusively for his own that he scarce wishes ever to make any excursion outside it, literary or personal; for he will not even live outside of it. He is hailed with especial pride by its inhabitants, as the vindicator of the Northern race of people, who had had no champion in literature from the very earliest times. The grateful inhabitants of Santander paid him the compliment of naming a fine street after one of his books, ‹Sotileza› (Fine Spun), choosing for the purpose the site at which a principal part of the action of the book took place; and also presented him a large painting, showing a scene from the book; while Torrelavega, the small town nearest his village, presented him with a piece of plate. Though literature may not bring very large money returns in a country with comparatively so few readers as Spain, it receives many places and preferments, and graceful honors of this kind. In like manner Zorilla, the poet, was publicly crowned, with a crown made of gold from the sands of the Darro at Granada.

Pereda's first novel, ‹Los Hombres de Pro› (Respectable Folks), was completed in 1874. It describes the rise in the world of Simon

Cerojo, who kept a little cross-roads grocery. It is a story of character, the elements of which might be found in almost any country. He finds that the men who «give life and character to communities in our day are not richer, wiser, of better origin, nor even much stronger in their spelling, than himself.» He is elected to the Congress, makes a foolish speech, sees his pretty daughter Julieta elope with a young adventurer of a journalist, is tricked out of the greater part of his fortune, and drops back again, disillusionized, to the lower level. The episode of the glib journalist, the humors of Don Simon's canvas, the rude mountain hidalgo in his isolation, the dialogue of the children teasing the unpopular Julieta, are some of the more pleasing passages of a book which is everywhere graphic and entertaining. ‹Don Gonzalo Gonzalez de la Gonzalera› (Mr. Gonzalo Gonzalez of Gonzalez-town), 1878, is a continuation of the above, in the sense that politics is a strong element of interest in both, and the abuses of popular suffrage, parliamentary misrule, and other modern social tendencies, are vividly and amusingly satirized in both. Don Gonzalo is one of those persons, returned after acquiring a small fortune in the Spanish colonies, who are called *Indianos*. Very little good is usually said of them. This one, besides being vulgar, is base at heart; and does much mischief. He is refused by the refined daughter of the impoverished hidalgo, whom he had aspired to marry, and is left severely alone in the vulgarly pretentious house he built to dazzle the community with. But the worst part of his deserts is meted out to him by an incorrigible shrew; for such is the wife he finally marries. Free and progressive as he is in literature, Pereda is singularly conservative, or frankly reactionary, both in his books and out of them, in all that relates to government and modern conditions. He favors the absolute form of monarchy; and he has even sat as a Carlist deputy in the Cortes. Galdós says of him in friendly mockery that he would support even the restoration of Philip II. in Spain. He recalls one of those, on our own side of the water, who should still see only the better side of slavery, and sigh over the disappearance of that genial, charming system. It is a striking contrast between practice and theory; it testifies to the literary conscience of the writer, and may fairly be considered, too, as a heightening touch to his originality, now that nearly all the world is of an opposite way of thinking.

The titles of his books at once give a clue to their vigorous and homely character. ‹De Tal Palo Tal Astilla› (A Chip of the Old Block) belongs to 1879; ‹El Sabor de la Tierruca› (Redolent of the Soil), 1881; ‹Pedro Sanchez,› 1883; ‹Sotileza› (Fine Spun), 1884; ‹La Montalvez,› 1887; ‹La Puchera› (The Family Board) and ‹El Buey Suelto› (The Unruly Steer), 1888; ‹Al Primer Vuelo› (The First

Flight from the Nest), 1890; ‘Nubes de Estio’ (Summer Clouds), 1890; ‘Peñas Arriba’ (The Upper Peaks), 1894. There have also appeared three other volumes of miscellany, in the style of the ‘Scenes in Montaña’: namely, ‘Tipos y Paisajes’ (Typical Figures and Landscapes), 1870; ‘Bocetos al Temple’ (Sketches in Distemper), 1873; and ‘Esbozos y Rasgunos’ (Scrawls and Scratches), 1880.

‘Sotileza’ is particularly the idyl of the sea; ‘El Sabor de la Tierruca’ that of the rustic folk of the shore; others again, like ‘La Puchera,’ are amphibious, dealing in an almost equal measure with both. Around the central figure of the fisher-girl in the first, and the young village squire in the second, are grouped a multitude of very real and living types; and yet, owing to a certain rhythmic, poetic feeling in the treatment, there is something of the eclogue about them,—a quality that recalls Theocritus, ‘Evangeline,’ and Mistral's ‘Mirèio.’ ‘Tal Palo Tal Astilla’ has something of the religious problem, like Galdós's ‘Gloria,’ and is less realistic than the others. ‘El Buey Suelto’ defends the institution of marriage and the family against certain dangerous subversive tendencies. ‘Pedro Sanchez,’ again, deals with political evils, in a tone of serene melancholy, which however is pessimistic rather about institutions than human nature itself. In ‘La Montalvez,’ for once, he abandons his mountain province, and treats with his usual ability—for he touches nothing that he does not adorn—of the society at Madrid; though society not of a pleasing cast.

Pereda's style is a treasury of forcible, idiomatic language; he is a master of dialogue, and excels in representing the racy talk of the lower orders of people. He has taken a long step towards realizing the ideal of many writers of our own day,—that of uniting the language of daily life with that of literary expression. He is genuinely humorous; and this humor, a legitimate continuation of the tradition of humor so long established in Spain, makes him everywhere entertaining, and keeps him, in spite of his idealizing proclivities, both from imposing upon us unreal Arcadias and from sinking into any hopeless depression of spirits.

William Henry Bishop

TUERTO'S FAMILY LIFE

From ‹La Leva›

Before going any further, the reader should be informed that there existed from time immemorial, between the seagoing folk of High Street [the street along the heights] and those by the water-side, an inextinguishable feud.

Each quarter forms a separate fishing corporation, or guild; and the two have not been willing even to adopt the same patron saint. The High Street folks, or the Upper Guild, chose Saint Peter, while those on Beach Street, or the Lower Guild, commend themselves to the holy martyrs Emeterius and Celadonius; and to those illustrious saintships — said to have miraculously come to port in a bark made of stone — they have built, at their own expense, a very pretty chapel, in the Miranda quarter, overlooking a wide expanse of ocean.

So now we continue.

Tuerto [«Cross-Eyes»] enters his house. He tosses off his sou'-wester or serviceable tarpaulin hat, throws down upon an old chest his duck waterproof, which he had carried on his shoulder, and hangs up on a nail a basket with an oil-skin covering, and full of fishing-tackle. His wife dishes up in an old broken pan a mess of beans and cabbage, badly cooked and worse seasoned, sets it on the chest, and puts alongside it a big piece of coarse brown bread. Tuerto, without letting fall a word, waits till his infants have got around the board also, and then begins to eat the mess with a pewter spoon. His wife and children accompany him, taking turns with another spoon, of wood. The beans and cabbage are finished. Tuerto has the air of expecting something next, which does not come; he looks at the dish, then into the bottom of the empty stew-pan, then finally at his wife. The woman turns pale.

«Where is the meat?» he at length inquires, with the chronic hoarse voice of the fisherman.

«The meat?» stammered his wife. «As the butcher's shop was closed when I went to get it, I did not bring any.»

«That's a lie. I gave you the two reals and a half to buy it yesterday noon, and the butcher's doesn't close till four. What have you done with the money?»

« The money ? — the money ? — It's in my pocket.»

« You thieving jade, if you've been drinking again, I swear I'll let daylight through you,» roared the enraged Tuerto, on observing the continually increasing confusion of his wife. « Let me see that money, and be quick about it, I say.»

The woman pulled forth tremblingly a few small coins from her pocket, and held them out to her husband, without fully opening her hand.

« Its only eight coppers you've got there, and I gave you twenty-one. Where's the rest ?»

« I must have lost — have lost them. I had twenty-one this morning.»

« Don't tell me such a thing as that: the two reals I gave you were in silver.»

« Yes, but I changed them at the market.»

« What has your mother done this morning ?» quickly demands Tuerto, clutching his eldest child by the arm.

The child trembles in affright, looks alternately at father and mother, and remains silent.

« Speak out, I say.»

« Mother will go and beat me if I do,» replied the poor little brat, sniveling.

«And if you don't answer me, I'll give you a crack that will spoil your face.»

The boy, who knows by hard experience that his father never deals in vain threats, now, despite the signals his mother makes him to keep still, shuts his eyes, and speaking as rapidly as if he feared the words would burn his mouth, says: —

« Mother brought home a pint of brandy this morning, and has the bottle hidden in the straw mattress.»

Tuerto no sooner hears these words than he fells his culprit spouse to the floor with a resounding whack, rushes to the bed, rummages amid the contents of the poor mattress, pulls out from it a small bottle which contains the remainder of the contraband liquor, and returning with it towards his wife, hurls it at her head at the moment when she is just getting up from the floor. It knocks her down anew, and the children are sprinkled with the flying spirits. The wretched woman, sorely hurt, laments and groans; the frightened children weep; and the irate mariner sallies forth to the balcony, cursing his wife and the day that he was ever born.

Uncle Tremontorio, who arrived from the sea at the same time with his mates Bolina [Billy Bowline] and Tuerto, had been in his balcony knitting away at his fishing-nets (his customary occupation when at home) from the beginning of the dispute between his neighbors. From time to time he would take a bite out of a hunk of bread, and another of dried codfish, the provision that constituted his usual dinner. Though he is perfectly well posted about what has just taken place [across the narrow street], it is not his way to mix himself up in what does not concern him. But the furious husband, who needs an outlet for venomous rage that still half chokes him, calls up his neighbor, and the pair shout from one balcony to the other the following dialogue:—

«Uncle Tremontorio, I can't stand this devil of a woman any longer. One of these days you'll hear of some desperate deed on my part; I suppose that's the way it will all end.»

«I have told you that it was your own fault, from the beginning. She tacked your way a little, and you let go your whole cable and thought your voyage was over.»

«What could I do? I thought then she was one of heaven's own saints.»

«What could you do? Do? why, what I've always told you: haul her taut, and make fast with a double turn. Rough wind astern? all right, ahead you go.»

«But there's not a bone in her body I haven't already tinkered at with a cudgel, as you might mend the ribs of a boat.»

«You waited till the wood was rotten, my friend.»

«As God is my witness she's the worst villain unhung. What is going to become of those poor brats of mine when I am taken away from them? for the devil will never take that woman: he has no place to put her. Last week I handed her twenty-four reals to dress the children with. Have you laid eyes on that money? Well, neither have I. The drunkard spent them for drink. I gave her a walloping that left her for dead, and yet what does she do? Three days after that she sells a sheet from our bed for a quart of rum. Yesterday I gave her twenty-one cents for meat, and she drank them also. And with all this the young ones are naked, I haven't a shirt to my back, and I never dare think of treating myself to an honest glass of wine of a fête-day.»

«Why don't you get an exorcism said over her? Maybe she's bewitched by evil spirits, and that's the cause of it.»

«I've spent a small fortune in those very tomfooleries, Tremontorio. I took her to more than three leagues from here, to get a parson that they said had the gift of such things, to chuck the gospels at her. Well, he did; then he gave me a little card he had said a prayer over, and a sprig of rue, sewed it all up in a bag, hung it round her neck, charged me nearly four dollars for it, and that was all the good it did—not the first blessed thing. The very next day she had a jag on worse than ever, and wanted to paint the town red. I've given her brandy with gunpower in it,—a thing, they say, that creates a distaste for liquor,—but that beast, did it affect her that way? Not much! she seemed to like the drink after that better than ever. I've laid out a treasure in candles alone, setting them up before the Holy Martyrs, to see if they'd rid her of the vice; and it was just the same as if I had not spent a farthing. I swear to you, I don't know what to do, Uncle Tremontorio, unless it is to kill her: there are no bounds to this vice of hers. Just tell me what you say of this: When I gave her the brandy with powder in it, she was taken with such a colic I thought she'd burst. I had heard that flannels soaked in spirits, applied good and hot, was a cure for that sort of pains in the stomach; so I heated up about half a pint of liquor in a saucepan. When it was blazing hot, I took it over to the bedside, where the thief of the world was writhing about in contortions. I had to leave the saucepan with her a minute while I went to the chest to get out some rags; I turned around, and, man, what do you think I saw? she was just swallowing down the last drops of the spirits from the saucepan, almost ablaze as it was. Man, man, was there ever a worse curse of God?»

«Well, friend—in regard to that—ahem! what can I say to you? When a woman chooses to take the crooked path, like yours, give her the stick, and plenty of it. If with that she doesn't mend her ways and float off in good style, then either sink her to the bottom, once for all, or string yourself up to a yard-arm.»

«I've told you already—what's the matter with you?—that I've covered every inch of her body with the welts of a stick, and I've decorated her face all over with bruises till there's hardly room for another.»

«Then go hang yourself, and leave me in peace to finish these meshes. And you may as well know that the reason I never married is to keep out of the devil's own scrape that you are in.»

THE CANDIDATE VISITS HIS VOTERS

From ‹Los Hombres de Pro›

Don Simon started upon his electioneering tour. In the first village of his district, at the poor inn, a group of six agents were waiting for him; their horses, caparisoned with ornamental trappings, after the fashion of the country, tied to the posts or the projecting window gratings. They received him hat in hand.

[All then passed into the dining-room, where a dozen more persons met them, and a liberal dinner was served, for which the candidate duly paid. The several days' ride through the mountain district next began.]

The cavalcade was headed by one of the six *caciques* [village magnates, previously mentioned]. He was a lean, dark man, with a large nose, a penetrating eye, his face almost beardless, although he was by no means young; he spoke little, but that to the point; and as to confidence in men, he would have been distrustful even of his own shadow. He knew the voters of the district, every man of them, with all his virtues, vices, minor faults, and necessities; and in consequence, he knew how to win or to compel them. . . .

«The ‹Squire›» (said he),—«for thus they call him,—whom we must see, is a rough sort of customer, but much bent on having everybody flatter and bow down to him. When we leave him, don't forget to give him a cigar; not one of the kind you furnished us at dinner, you know, but one of those you have in your cigar-case for your own particular use.»

Don Simon did his best not to notice this polite little slur, and put himself at the orders of his adviser. . . .

The party found the local great man presiding over the turning-up of a new field he had just bought on that out-of-the-way upland. He was still youthful; and he had a despicable physiognomy. He manifested no great curiosity on the approach of the little troop. He confined himself to returning coldly the very affable salute which Don Celso [the leader] directed to him, as representative of all the rest, and especially of Don Simon, whom he proceeded to introduce to the impassive elector as follows: —

« This gentleman is our candidate, Don Simon de las Peñascales by name, an illustrious man, I assure you, with thirty thousand dollars income, and great talents. He comes to-day expressly to thank you for your kind co-operation in his coming election, reserving a more fitting payment till some later opportunity shall offer.»

« Servant, sir,» responded the « Squire,» laconically, staring at his distinguished guest.

« Delighted, my dear sir. I hope I find you well,» began Don Simon, uncovering his head with a grandly sweeping bow, and tendering his right hand to him of the new-plowed land.

« Me? ye-up, I'm well,» replied the « Squire,» without sign of a movement to take the proffered hand.

« Do you smoke?» the candidate now inquired, feeling for his cigar-case.

«Once in a while, if the tobacco is good for anything.»

« Then do me the favor to accept this. It is of the choice brand of the Vuelta de Abajo.

« You sure of that?» grunted the other, taking it and biting off the end.

«And how are our affairs going around here?» inquired the candidate, trying to strike out some spark of interest from that piece of flint, that unmitigated boor.

« We'll» — puff — « see when — the time comes,» he returned, using up about half a box of matches in lighting his cigar in the open air.

« No need of asking him that, Don Simon,» remarked Don Celso. « When you come to see what the Squire has done, I warrant you'll be more than satisfied.»

« In that case,» said Don Simon, taking Don Celso's hint, « and since we still have far to go to-day, and since I have had the great honor of making your acquaintance, it only remains for me to put myself at your disposal for anything that you may demand of me, either now or henceforward and forever.»

« The same thing say I,» muttered the Squire, scarce touching the hand offered him anew, and turning back to the men working for him.

When they had ridden on a bit, Don Simon could not help saying to Don Celso in a crestfallen way:—

«If that fellow is one of those who support me, what can I expect of the doubtful ones? And, for heaven's sake, what sort of manners will those have who are against me?»

[Later on, they meet an inn-keeper who charges for the very rent of the ground their horses stand on while they are talking to him. This incident is developed in a long and amusing account. He promises to vote and use his influence for Don Simon, if the latter will see that a certain road is built, joining his mountain inn to the main road; but only on condition—as other candidates have promised the same thing before—that Don Simon shall put up the money for the road, about $3,000, in advance, out of his own pocket. Don Simon is disappointed, betrayed, put upon, in numberless ways, and would have lost his election except that—having started out as a Liberal candidate—he shrewdly turns Conservative, and secures his seat by the favor of the ministry.]

THE PORTRAIT OF DON GONZALO GONZALEZ OF GONZALEZ-TOWN

From ‘Don Gonzalo Gonzalez de la Gonzalera’

Look at him; here he is:—A man of middling size, carefully clad in a suit of fine black, his knobby flat feet shod in refulgent patent leather; clean-shaven; his shirt-collar terminating, above his low-cut vest and glossy embroidered shirt-front, in a butterfly-shaped bow, made with the open-worked ends of his cravat. Over all this wandered in serpentine convolutions a heavy gold chain. His hair was very much frizzed, and upon two lateral rows of ringlets, rather than upon his head, lightly rested a silk hat. One of his thick, hairy hands grasped a gold-headed cane, while in the other, lying along his thigh, he held ceremoniously a pair of kid gloves. . . . The speech of such a man may be divined: it was over-soft, mawkish, sickening. He doted on alliterations, like *huevo hilado*, and he used to say *frido*, *cercanidas*, and *cacado*.* . . .

What name should he adopt on going back to his native village? His father, who used to be dubbed «Tony Breechclout» for short, was called «Antonio Gonzalez»; he himself «Nicholas.» But if he were going to style himself simply «Nicholas Gonzalez,» he might as well make it «Johnny Drumsticks» and have done with it. . . . What if, for example, without ceasing

*It is a vulgar affectation of elegance, in the Spanish Americas, to insert a «d» in such words, which should be simply *frío*, *cercanías*, *cacao*.

to sign «Gonzalez,» he should add to it something like «de la Gonzalera»? Some people shorten their names, do they not? what harm, then, if some others should lengthen theirs out a little? A trifle more or less of a thing — what difference does it make?

No sooner planned than decided. He ordered a thousand lithographed visiting-cards of various tinted pasteboards; and upon these was placed, in fantastic characters and in vivid colors, the name «Gonzalo Gonzalez de la Gonzalera.»

CLETO'S PROPOSAL TO SOTILEZA

From ‹Sotileza›

[Sotileza is a poor waif, adopted by a worthy family, and has turned out to be a charming and admirable character. The name is derived from a very fine, strong cord, used in the apparatus of the fishermen. Cleto belongs to a family of sardine-sellers, the terror and scandal of the street; but he himself aspires to higher things.]

SOTILEZA continued her sewing on the garment of Pachuca, by the light of the candle which she had just set in its socket on the wall. Cleto, now in her presence, actually felt the tremendous difficulty which he had trusted to conjure away by his boldness and resolution. The gift of speech — the confounded gift of gab, that was always denied him — was lacking to him at this moment more than ever.

«I was passing by,» he began to stammer, trembling with his diffidence, «I — happened to be passing along this way, and so — er — as I was passing this way, I says to myself, says I, ‹I'll just stop into the shop a minute.› So that's the way I happened to come — My! but that's a good skirt you're sewing there, Sotileza. Yours, is it?»

Sotileza told him it was not; and out of politeness, asked him to sit down.

Cleto took a seat a good distance away from her; then, looking and looking at her a long while, as if he were trying to intoxicate himself through the medium of his eyesight to a sufficient extent to break the trammels that held his tongue, he at length succeeded in saying: —

«Sotileza, once you sewed on a button for me. Do you recollect about it?»

"I'm afraid too many other things have happened since," she returned smilingly, without looking up from her work.

"Well, for me, it's just the same thing as if it took place yesterday."

"Well, what of it, supposing it was so?"

"Why—er—why, you see, after that button— It was like a jewel to me; and I've got it yet, right here on the waistband of these breeches. Look at it; do you see it? After that button, I kept coming back and coming back to this house, for there's no staying in mine; and by gracious! well, you know that, Sotileza, that isn't what you might call a habitation at all, nor are those female kin of mine women like other women, nor is that man there a man. Well, then, I had never known anything better than that kind of folks, and for want of knowing better, I gave you a slap in the face one day; you remember about that. Holy jinks! if you only knew how sorry I've been for that slap, ever since."

Sotileza began to be overcome with astonishment at the discourse she was listening to; for never had anything even remotely like to this proceeded from Cleto's lips. She fixed her eyes with interest upon his; but the effect of this was, that she cut short not only the poor fellow's words but the very breath of his body.

"But why are you saying these things to me now?" she demanded.

"Because I've got to, Sotileza," Cleto plucked up heart to respond; "that's the reason:—and because nobody else would be willing to come to you and say them for me. I hope it's no offense. Now, see here, Sotileza, just see what's happening to me. I did not know till lately, myself, what was the matter with me; and I let them go on,—that kind of griping feeling in my insides and that dizzy feeling in my head, that got hold of me when I came in here. And you kept on growing up and getting prettier every day: heavens, what new rail you kept whipping on nearly every time I saw you! No offense in looking on at it, was there? at least I hope not; and no more was there, either, in warming up my heart with a glimpse of this shop now and then. Over there in our tenement there was nothing of the kind, by a long chalk: filth and brutishness, the good name of every person they spoke of pitched head first out of the balcony, not a scrap of decency about anything they did. By thunder! it's enough to give a fellow a bad temper, even if he was born with one like sugar. That's the way I came to give you that slap, Sotileza; if it wasn't, I would tell you so, honestly. Why, if any one was to say to me, right here and how, 'Cleto, you go and jump off the ramparts for Sotileza,' I would do it, Sotileza, if it could be of the slightest service to you, even if I got nothing out of it but my broken neck. I never had any of this kind of feeling before. Here you have a full account of it without asking for it—and without offense, I hope. You see how it was; it wasn't my fault. I liked those feelings too, in spite of the pain,—I liked them immensely; they made my disposition of the purest honey, as if I had never had any other. I was filled up, filled full with them, till it seemed as if my body wouldn't hold any more. Then afterwards a tumble here and a stumble there—a heavy surf, as it were, rolling round inside of me; little sleep of nights, and a lump in my throat all the time. Look you, Sotileza, I used to think there were no more troubles than those I had at home; but now I can see that I slept better, twice over, than since all this trouble began about you. I—I—don't offend anybody, do I, in talking this way, Sotileza? And then—er, while all that was going on that I was telling you just now, I got to getting fonder and fonder of you every day, and I got to having more and more respect for you; and I tried harder every day to see if I couldn't read your wishes in your eyes, so that I could go and serve you somehow without your having to tell me.

"And so all that was going on month in and month out, and year after year; I was slowly foundering, and there was no way of getting afloat again. For you see, Sotileza, it's one thing for a man to be chock full of feelings like this, and another thing for him to speak up and tell his girl about them, if he's tongue-tied like me and can't put two words together. It knocks me all out when I think what you are, and then what I am,—the very mud of the gutter, in comparison. Well, I just couldn't hold it all in any longer, and I went to some folks that understand how to talk about this kind of thing, to get them to come and see you for me. But what do you think? they wouldn't do it. There's a nice charitable lot of parties, isn't it, to lend a hand when a man was in such sore straits as I was? You are attending, aren't you, Sotileza, to all this I'm telling you? Well, the upshot of it was, that since nobody would come and speak to you for me, I had to come and speak to you myself, and—and—now I'm doing it."

It was no news to Sotileza that Cleto was in love with her; for she had read it clearly in all his looks and actions for some time past. She was not surprised, therefore, at his avowal; but she was surprised, and not a little, that he should have mustered the courage to make it. Looking at him with her serene gaze, she said to him:—

"Of course there's no offense in what you say to me, Cleto; but in the name of all the saints, what possesses you to make you say it to me just now?"

"My stars! what *always* possesses people to tell such things? So they can be known."

"Well, I know them, Cleto, I know them: now are you satisfied?"

"Hum—er—why, no, not altogether. That is not enough, Sotileza."

"And what do you wish more?"

"What do I wish more? Gracious goodness! I wish to be a man like another; I want to live a different kind of life from what I've been living: you yourself have been the light that has shown me what another kind of life could be. I want to live the way life goes on in this little shop of yours; I am dying to work for you, and to be neat and clean and decent-spoken, like you. I would kiss the ground you walk on, and try and get you the very mermaids from the sea, whom no one has ever set eyes on, if you wanted them. Is it too little that I offer?"

He was veritably transfigured at this moment; and Sotileza could not but marvel at the change.

"I have never seen you so lively and so talkative as to-day," was her answer.

"The mounting wave has burst," he rejoined, getting bolder still; "and I myself believe I am not what I was before. I've set myself down sometimes for a regular idiot; but by the living gracious! I swear I am so no longer, with this that is going on inside of me, and that makes me talk in spite of myself. If you can work such a miracle as this without even knowing it, what miracles could you not work with me when you really put your mind on it? Now just look at me, Sotileza: I've got no vices; I never was afraid of work; I haven't a grudge against a person in the world; I am accustomed to do with little; and picking out the very best I've had in my life, it has never been anything but pain and trouble. Seeing here, about you, something so entirely different, you know what a value I set on it — and whose fault it is that I do. There's a man needed in this house. Are you taking in what I am telling you, Sotileza?»

Sotileza was giving heed to it only too well. For that very reason she replied with a certain curtness: —

«Yes, I am; but what of it?»

«Again? Confound it! you make me that answer again,» cried Cleto angrily. «Or is this your way of saying no, without saying it directly?»

«Come, Cleto,» said Sotileza coldly, «I am not under obligations to answer all the questions you choose to put me on such particulars, or any others. I live quietly here in my house without speaking ill of anybody. I have none but the kindest wishes towards you, and I know your value full well; nevertheless I have my own way of thinking and feeling, and I wish to make no change in my life at present.»

«What have you said, Sotileza?» exclaimed Cleto in dismay. «Oh, this is boring a big auger-hole into the hull. I am wrecked, I am lost.»

«Don't put it in that way; it is not so bad as that. But suppose, for the sake of argument, that if, instead of the *no*, Cleto, which you dread to hear, I should say the *yes* you ask of me, how would you be the gainer by that? You have to steal into this house, carefully hiding your movements from your family over in yours, even if you come here but for an instant, just to pass the time of day. If such is the case now, what *would* it be if — if the plan you are so anxious for came to pass?»

«You've hit it, Sotileza: that's just what the other folks told me. But is there any sense and right in such a state of things? *I* didn't choose the family that I belong to.»

«Who are the other folks that told you the same thing that I have?» now inquired Sotileza quickly, ignoring the woe-begone lamentations of the poor young fellow.

«Father Polinar, in the first place» [the parish schoolmaster].

«Father Polinar? And who next?»

«Don Andres» [a young man of the upper class, in love with Sotileza himself].

«And you went to — to that person, with this pretty tale? What did he say to you, pray?»

«He abused me like a pickpocket. He left me for dead, as you might say, when he got through with me.»

« Well, you see then. When was this? »

« Yesterday afternoon. »

« You deserved all you got. Why do you go to any one with that nonsense? »

« Great heavens! don't I keep telling you? My liking for you choked me; I lacked courage to tell you, and I looked around for some one else to do it for me. I shall not look any further, now that I have got the trick of speaking up for myself. But this is not to the point, Sotileza. »

« What is the point? »

« Why, that because my folks across the way are a bad lot, I should have to get the mitten from the only girl I ever loved. »

« I haven't given you the mitten, have I? »

« Of course it amounts to that, if you shut your door against me on account of my family over there. »

« I did not even say I was going to do that; I merely put you the case as a supposition: now do you understand? »

« I'm afraid I do,— born to bad luck that I am. But tell me clearly, for that is what I came to-day to find out. Don't be afraid to speak up and say the worst. »

« I beg of you not to make me speak. »

« No, it will be better to speak than keep silent. See here, Sotileza,—for this is the kind of a person I am: come now, do you think me of too little account? Then tell me how you would like me to be, and I shall be only too glad to become that, cost what it may. Is there some one else who has got the inside track with you? is that the reason? I tell you I would be a dozen times as good a man as he, no matter who he is, if you would take an interest in me. »

« There's a nice piece of conceit, I must say. »

« My very life is bound up in this matter, Sotileza: would I dare to talk so, otherwise? Oh, I beseech you— The whole thing is to have a little kindness for me in your heart, and all the rest will follow as if upon wheels. You will only have to say to me, ‹ You've got to do this or do that, or go here or go there, › and I will jump and do it on the instant. I shall not disturb you the least bit; a mere corner of the house will do for me, and the farthest corner at that, even if it be worse than the one I have now. I will eat the scraps you leave over, of what I gain for you with my hardest daily toil, so that you may live at leisure like a lady. I can live on just nothing at all, Sotileza; for as sure as God is in heaven, what makes me fatter than anything is to have a little order, a grain of human kindness, a scrap or two of jolly good-nature, in the house. By the powers, how I should enjoy that kind of thing! So now you see what I beg of you, what I beseech of you. And you won't be offended, will you? And you will say yes, Sotileza? I know you will; for one cannot be allowed to beg in this way for what is impossible.»

The desperate energy of the poor youth only caused Sotileza to smile. He persisted, but in vain, in trying to draw out a definite answer from her. His obstinacy in the end annoyed her; and she showed it. Then Cleto, scowling with his disappointment and wretchedness, said:—

«Will you even admit to me that what I have said to you does not merely go in at one ear and out at the other?»

«And you, animal, what difference does it make to you?» snapped out Sotileza, in a nettled, offensive manner that froze the very blood in his veins. «Who and what are you, anyway, to bring me to book in this way?»

«Nothing, nothing; the very dust under your feet,» he answered with abject humility, conscious too late of the rudeness and lack of tact he had been guilty of. «The trouble I am in blinded me, and I spoke without thinking. Don't be put out with me: it was only that; I swear to you by all—»

«Leave me in peace.»

«Yes, but promise not to lay up a dislike against me,» pleaded Cleto.

«Get out of here, get away from here, for I can hardly endure the sight of you.»

«Oh, what an unlucky wretch am I,» he groaned. «And will you never pardon me?»

«No, unless you leave here instantly.»

«Don't be too hard with me: I'm going; I'm gone.»

And with this, Cleto, heavy and woe-begone, sallied forth from the little shop, whence he had more than half believed in advance he should sally forth triumphant and joyful.

[Cleto makes various long voyages, returns a much more accomplished and presentable person, without losing his kindly and upright nature; and in course of time, Sotileza, having the good sense to feel that this is a much better match for her than one with Andres in the higher station, marries him.]

Translated from the original Spanish by William Henry Bishop.

CHARLES PERRAULT

(1628–1703)

Where was Red Riding-Hood born? Over what realm ruled the parents of Sleeping Beauty? How long since the Fairy Godmother saved Cinderella from her hard lot? No one knows; or whether these charming maidens and others, and clever Little Thumb, Puss-in-Boots, «Figaro of the Nursery,» and their brothers, are French, German, Persian, Indian, or Egyptian, or from the Northland. They have wandered over the world winning friends. Always young and fascinating, they live through the centuries. They came into existence when the races of men were young and simple-minded, and they have become the delight of unjaded child minds forever. No one knows when they were first heard of in France, but their stories were familiar to the peasants long before finding literary expression. The charcoal burners around their forest fires, the fathers and mothers gathered with the children beside the hearths in wretched cabins, thrilled with awe and delight at the myths inherited from their ancestors; and doubtless modified by their own imaginations. These were the stories first written out, and published toward the end of the seventeenth century, by Charles Perrault.

Charles Perrault

Before considering them further, it will be interesting to know something of the man who, after an arduous public life, turned to fairy lore when he was over sixty, and in it won lasting fame and child love.

Charles Perrault, the youngest of four brothers, all of whom became distinguished, was born in Paris, January 12th, 1628. His father, a barrister, taught him at home; and then sent him to the Collège de Beauvais. He was a boy of noteworthy intelligence, and with the most ardent desire for accurate and absolute information. He argued and philosophized with his masters until ordered to be quiet. Then he boldly left school, accompanied by a young disciple named Beaurain, and wandering in the Luxembourg Garden, the truants laid out a plan of home education for themselves. This, strangely enough,—

for French boys usually were then as they are now, in strict subservience to their elders,—they were allowed to follow. Perrault's impatience of routine and surrender to the guidance of his own individuality lasted always, and led him to employ his versatile talents in a great variety of ways. He studied law; then wearied of its minutiæ after a few years' practice, and resigned his profession. In 1657 he aided his brother Claude, the famous architect, in building a house; and that so skillfully that in 1663 Colbert chose him to assist Claude in superintending the royal building operations. One of his achievements in this capacity was the design for the peristyle of the Louvre. Witty, genial, popular, versed in art and literature, he made himself very useful to Colbert; and at the minister's desire was elected to the Academy in 1671. Upon that authoritative body the practical Perrault exercised a lasting influence. He ordered all its business affairs. He brought about election by ballot, and himself invented and introduced a balloting machine. More than all, he suggested the public receptions to new members, which have given the Academy so strong a hold upon the nation. During these years he constantly showed himself possessed of a modern progressive spirit, and impatient of dead tradition. When Colbert would have reserved the palace gardens for royal use, Perrault protested: «I am persuaded that the gardens of kings are made so great and spacious in order that all their children may walk in them;» at which Colbert smiled and left them open to little Parisians.

Perrault was a true royalist, sincerely revering the court and its customs. His practical work and his panegyrics brought royal favor and reward. One of these panegyrics—‹Le Siècle de Louis XIV.›—caused the famous Battle of the Books, for his share in which Perrault was best known in his own day. He read this poem to the Academy, and its extolling of the present over the past aroused the wrath of Boileau, who attacked him furiously in behalf of the classics. A war of epigram ensued; and in his own defense Perrault published a long poem, tedious reading now,—‹Le Parallèle des Anciens et des Modernes.› Here again he showed his belief that the new and the future promised more than the past. Each side had supporters; neither side won: but the battle raged hotly for years, and was long continued in England.

Colbert was a crabbed, difficult master, and grew more so. And Perrault married the lady of his own choice, not Colbert's for him, which made trouble. So his position became irksome; and in 1683 he resigned. After 1686 he devoted himself to authorship; and wrote a versified history, short poems, and religious works.

He was glad to exchange public intrigue for simple home life; «glad to train his children and turn from what was artificial to what was vital and genuine.» In 1691 he published anonymously the first of his famous tales. This was ‹La Marquise de Salusses, ou La Patience de Grisilidis,›—our Patient Griselda. The plot, borrowed from Boccaccio, he treated in verse less able than his prose, and suggestive of an imitation of La Fontaine. ‹Les Souhaits Ridicules› (The Foolish Wishes), and ‹Peau d'Âne› (The Donkey's Skin), were also written first in verse.

Perrault may have heard his children telling the old stories that he himself had heard in childhood; and his mind, wearied of subtlety, may have found them freshly interesting and beautiful. His ‹Contes de ma Mère l'Oye,› the tales of genial Mother Goose, were first published as a collection in 1697. They had already appeared singly, and in 1694 three of them had been included in the ‹Miscellany› of Mostjen, a bookseller of The Hague.

The ‹Contes de ma Mère l'Oye› were published in the name of Perrault's young son, Perrault d'Armancour, as though written by the child; and this has greatly confused the critics. The charm of the stories is their vivid style. The straightforward telling, the choice of detail, the graphic coloring, the general simplicity of tone, suggest a child's rendering. But interspersed are witty phrases, often parenthetical, mature reflections, and touches of amiable irony, for which Perrault himself is surely responsible. Each story terminates with an odd little moral in rhyme, usually omitted from the English versions.

The French mind has always been in sympathy with fairies; not boisterous tricksy elves like those of Briton and Germany, but deft little ladies who love to aid unfortunate human protégés. They are rarely malevolent like the slighted eighth fairy of Sleeping Beauty's christening. The element of the grotesque and fascinatingly horrible is usually supplied by ogres and ogresses, direct descendants of the cannibals told about by early voyagers. Like all folk-lore, these early French tales abound in clever beasts, such as Puss-in-Boots. To primitive receptivity of heart and mind, it is no more wonderful that a cat should talk than that it should purr. Inexperience believes in fairies as readily as in men; hence the delightful matter-of-course tone in Perrault's enchanted world. The humor is usually a simple burlesque, as in ‹The Foolish Wishes,› when the black pudding sticks to the man's nose.

Perrault's stories made refreshing appeal to the courtiers and fine ladies at magnificent Louis's court. They welcomed them in the spirit which led them to throw aside silks and velvets, and masquerade as shepherds and shepherdesses.

Since then many generations of scholars have studied Perrault's text, finding their successive clues back to shadowy antiquity. For most of the tales they have discovered fanciful interpretations, based upon recollections of mythology. These may or may not be legitimate. Sleeping Beauty may have been winter, and the Prince reawakening spring; but children love the story for itself, not for the metaphor.

‹Bluebeard› probably has a more recent origin than the others. He may have been suggested by mediæval Gilles de Retz, notorious for cruel murders of children, which he expiated by being publicly burned. Or he may have been Cormorus, a Breton prince, reputed a wife-murderer. At any rate, he is firmly established as the fiercest of nursery bogies.

Perrault's stories have grown in popularity for two hundred years. England, Germany, and other nations soon took possession of them. They have been endlessly retold; changed, colored to suit the taste of the nations which adopted them. But Perrault's brilliant touch is discernible under all the modifications; and to him directly, we owe much of our best-loved fairy literature.

LITTLE RED RIDING–HOOD

ONCE upon a time there lived in a certain village a little country girl, the prettiest creature was ever seen. Her mother was excessively fond of her; and her grandmother doted on her still more. This good woman got made for her a little red riding-hood; which became the girl so extremely well that everybody called her Little Red Riding-Hood.

One day her mother, having made some custards, said to her:—

«Go, my dear, and see how thy grandmamma does, for I hear she has been very ill; carry her a custard, and this little pot of butter.»

Little Red Riding-Hood set out immediately to go to her grandmother, who lived in another village.

As she was going through the wood, she met with Gaffer Wolf, who had a very great mind to eat her up, but he durst not, because of some fagot-makers hard by in the forest. He asked her whither she was going. The poor child, who did not know that it was dangerous to stay and hear a wolf talk, said to him:—

«I am going to see my grandmamma, and carry her a custard and a little pot of butter from my mamma.»

«Does she live far off?» said the Wolf.

«Oh! ay,» answered Little Red Riding-Hood: «it is beyond that mill you see there, at the first house in the village.»

«Well,» said the Wolf, «and I'll go and see her too. I'll go this way and go you that, and we shall see who will be there soonest.»

The Wolf began to run as fast as he could, taking the nearest way; and the little girl went by that farthest about, diverting herself in gathering nuts, running after butterflies, and making nosegays of such little flowers as she met with. The Wolf was not long before he got to the old woman's house. He knocked at the door — tap, tap.

«Who's there?»

«Your grandchild, Little Red Riding-Hood,» replied the Wolf, counterfeiting her voice; «who has brought you a custard and a little pot of butter sent you by mamma.»

The good grandmother, who was in bed, because she was somewhat ill, cried out: —

«Pull the bobbin, and the latch will go up.»

The Wolf pulled the bobbin, and the door opened; and then presently he fell upon the good woman and ate her up in a moment, for it was above three days that he had not touched a bit. He then shut the door and went into the grandmother's bed, expecting Little Red Riding-Hood, who came some time afterwards and knocked at the door — tap, tap.

«Who's there?»

Little Red Riding-Hood, hearing the big voice of the Wolf, was at first afraid; but believing her grandmother had got a cold and was hoarse, answered: —

«'Tis your grandchild, Little Red Riding-Hood, who has brought you a custard and a little pot of butter mamma sends you.»

The Wolf cried out to her, softening his voice as much as he could: —

«Pull the bobbin, and the latch will go up.»

Little Red Riding-Hood pulled the bobbin, and the door opened.

The Wolf, seeing her come in, said to her, hiding himself under the bed-clothes: —

«Put the custard and the little pot of butter upon the stool, and come and lie down with me.»

Little Red Riding-Hood undressed herself and went into bed, where, being greatly amazed to see how her grandmother looked in her night-clothes, she said to her:—

«Grandmamma, what great arms you have got!»

«That is the better to hug thee, my dear.»

«Grandmamma, what great legs you have got!»

«That is to run the better, my child.»

«Grandmamma, what great ears you have got!»

«That is to hear the better, my child.»

«Grandmamma, what great eyes you have got!»

«It is to see the better, my child.»

«Grandmamma, what great teeth you have got!»

«That is to eat thee up.»

And saying these words, this wicked wolf fell upon Little Red Riding-Hood, and ate her all up.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY IN THE WOOD

There were formerly a King and a Queen, who were sorry that they had no children; so sorry that it cannot be expressed. They went to all the waters in the world; vows, pilgrimages, all ways were tried, and all to no purpose.

At last, however, the Queen had a daughter. There was a very fine christening; and the Princess had for her godmothers all the fairies they could find in the whole kingdom (they found seven), that every one of them might give her a gift, as was the custom of fairies in those days. By this means the Princess had all the perfections imaginable.

After the ceremonies of the christening were over, all the company returned to the King's palace, where was prepared a great feast for the fairies. There was placed before every one of them a magnificent cover, with a case of massive gold, wherein were a spoon, knife, and fork,—all of pure gold set with diamonds and rubies. But as they were all sitting down at table they saw come into the hall a very old fairy, whom they had not invited, because it was above fifty years since she had been out of a certain tower, and she was believed to be either dead or enchanted.

The King ordered her a cover, but could not furnish her with a case of gold as the others, because they had only seven, made for the seven fairies. The old Fairy fancied she was slighted, and muttered some threats between her teeth. One of the young fairies who sat by her overheard how she grumbled; and judging that she might give the little Princess some unlucky gift, went as soon as they rose from the table, and hid herself behind the hangings, that she might speak last, and repair as much as she could the evil which the old Fairy might intend.

In the mean while all the fairies began to give their gifts to the Princess. The youngest gave her for gift that she should be the most beautiful person in the world; the next, that she should have the wit of an angel; the third, that she should have a wonderful grace in everything she did; the fourth, that she should dance perfectly well; the fifth, that she should sing like a nightingale; and the sixth, that she should play all kinds of music to the utmost perfection.

The old Fairy's turn coming next, with a head shaking more with spite than age, she said that the Princess should have her hand pierced with a spindle and die of the wound. This terrible gift made the whole company tremble, and everybody fell a-crying.

At this very instant the young Fairy came out from behind the hangings, and spake these words aloud:—

"Assure yourselves, O King and Queen, that your daughter shall not die of this disaster. It is true, I have no power to undo entirely what my elder has done. The Princess shall indeed pierce her hand with a spindle; but instead of dying, she shall only fall into a profound sleep, which shall last a hundred years, at the expiration of which a king's son shall come and awake her."

The King, to avoid the misfortune foretold by the old Fairy, caused immediately the proclamation to be made, whereby everybody was forbidden, on pain of death, to spin with a distaff and spindle, or to have so much as any spindle in their houses. About fifteen or sixteen years after, the King and Queen being gone to one of their houses of pleasure, the young Princess happened one day to divert herself in running up and down the palace; when going up from one apartment to another, she came into a little room on the top of a tower, where a good old woman, alone, was spinning with her spindle. This good woman had never heard of the King's proclamation against spindles.

«What are you doing there, goody?» said the Princess.

«I am spinning, my pretty child,» said the old woman, who did not know who she was.

«Ha!» said the Princess, «this is very pretty; how do you do it? Give it to me, that I may see if I can do so.»

She had no sooner taken it into her hand than, whether being very hasty at it, somewhat unhandy, or that the decree of the Fairy had so ordained it, it ran into her hand, and she fell down in a swoon.

The good old woman, not knowing very well what to do in this affair, cried out for help. People came in from every quarter in great numbers; they threw water upon the Princess's face, unlaced her, struck her on the palms of her hands, and rubbed her temples with Hungary-water; but nothing would bring her to herself.

And now the King, who came up at the noise, bethought himself of the prediction of the fairies; and judging very well that this must necessarily come to pass, since the fairies had said it, caused the Princess to be carried into the finest apartment in his palace, and to be laid upon a bed all embroidered with gold and silver.

One would have taken her for a little angel, she was so very beautiful; for her swooning away had not diminished one bit of her complexion,—her cheeks were carnation, and her lips were coral: her eyes were indeed shut, but she was heard to breathe softly, which satisfied those about her that she was not dead. The King commanded that they should not disturb her, but let her sleep quietly till her hour of awaking was come.

The good Fairy who had saved her life by condemning her to sleep a hundred years was in the kingdom of Matakin, twelve thousand leagues off, when this accident befell the Princess: but she was instantly informed of it by a little dwarf, who had boots of seven leagues; that is, boots with which he could tread over seven leagues of ground in one stride. The Fairy came away immediately, and she arrived, about an hour after, in a fiery chariot drawn by dragons.

The King handed her out of the chariot, and she approved everything he had done; but as she had very great foresight, she thought when the Princess should awake she might not know what to do with herself, being all alone in this old palace; and this was what she did: she touched with her wand everything in the palace (except the King and the Queen) — governesses, maids of honor, ladies of the bed-chamber, gentlemen, officers, stewards, cooks, undercooks, scullions, guards, with their beefeaters, pages, footmen; she likewise touched all the horses which were in the stables, as well pads as others, the great dogs in the outward court, and pretty little Mopsey too, the Princess's little spaniel, which lay by her on the bed.

Immediately upon her touching them they all fell asleep, that they might not awake before their mistress, and that they might be ready to wait upon her when she wanted them. The very spits at the fire, as full as they could hold of partridges and pheasants, did fall asleep also. All this was done in a moment. Fairies are not long in doing their business.

And now the King and Queen, having kissed their dear child without waking her, went out of the palace and put forth a proclamation that nobody should dare to come near it.

This, however, was not necessary: for in a quarter of an hour's time there grew up all round about the park such a vast number of trees, great and small, bushes and brambles, twining one within another, that neither man nor beast could pass through; so that nothing could be seen but the very top of the towers of the palace, and that too not unless it was a good way off. Nobody doubted but the Fairy gave herein a very extraordinary sample of her art, that the Princess, while she continued sleeping, might have nothing to fear from any curious people.

When a hundred years were gone and passed, the son of the King then reigning, and who was of another family from that of the sleeping Princess, being gone a-hunting on that side of the country, asked: —

What those towers were which he saw in the middle of a great thick wood?

Every one answered according as they had heard. Some said:

That it was a ruinous old castle, haunted by spirits.

Others, that all the sorcerers and witches of the country kept there their sabbath or night's meeting.

The common opinion was that an ogre lived there; and that he carried thither all the little children he could catch, that he might eat them up at his leisure, without anybody being able to follow him, as having himself alone the power to pass through the wood.

The Prince was at a stand, not knowing what to believe, when a very aged countryman spake to him thus:—

« May it please your Royal Highness, it is now about fifty years since I heard from my father, who heard my grandfather say, that there was then in this castle a princess, the most beautiful was ever seen; that she must sleep there a hundred years, and should be waked by a king's son, for whom she was reserved.»

The young Prince was all on fire at these words, believing, without weighing the matter, that he could put an end to this rare adventure; and, pushed on by love and honor, resolved that moment to look into it.

Scarce had he advanced towards the wood when all the great trees, the bushes, and the brambles gave way of themselves to let him pass through; he walked up to the castle which he saw at the end of a large avenue which he went into; and what a little surprised him was that he saw none of his people could follow him, because the trees closed again as soon as he had passed through them. However, he did not cease from continuing his way: a young and amorous prince is always valiant.

He came into a spacious outward court, where everything he saw might have frozen up the most fearless person with horror. There reigned over all a most frightful silence; the image of death everywhere showed itself, and there was nothing to be seen but stretched-out bodies of men and animals, all seeming to be dead. He however very well knew, by the ruby faces and pimpled noses of the beefeaters, that they were only asleep; and their goblets, wherein still remained some drops of wine, showed plainly that they fell asleep in their cups.

He then crossed a court paved with marble, went up the stairs, and came into the guard chamber, where guards were standing in their ranks, with their muskets upon their shoulders, and snoring as loud as they could. After that he went through several rooms full of gentlemen and ladies all asleep, some standing, others sitting. At last he came into a chamber all gilded with gold, where he saw upon a bed, the curtains of which were all open, the finest sight that was ever beheld,—a princess, who appeared to be about fifteen or sixteen years of age, and whose bright, and in a manner resplendent, beauty had somewhat in it divine. He approached with trembling and admiration, and fell down before her upon his knees.

And now, as the enchantment was at an end, the Princess awaked; and looking on him with eyes more tender than the first view might seem to admit of,—

"Is it you, my Prince?" said she to him. "You have waited a long while."

The Prince, charmed with these words, and much more with the manner in which they were spoken, knew not how to show his joy and gratitude; he assured her that he loved her better than he did himself; their discourse was not well connected, they did weep more than talk,—little eloquence, a great deal of love. He was more at a loss than she, and we need not wonder at it: she had time to think on what to say to him; for it is very probable (though history mentions nothing of it) that the good Fairy, during so long a sleep, had given her very agreeable dreams. In short, they talked four hours together, and yet they said not half what they had to say.

In the mean while all the palace awaked; every one thought upon their particular business, and as all of them were not in love they were ready to die for hunger. The chief lady of honor, being as sharp set as other folks, grew very impatient, and told the Princess aloud that supper was served up. The Prince helped the Princess to rise: she was entirely dressed, and very magnificently, but his Royal Highness took care not to tell her that she was dressed like his great-grandmother, and had a point band peeping over a high collar; she looked not a bit the less charming and beautiful for all that.

They went into the great hall of looking-glasses, where they supped, and were served by the Princess's officers; the violins and hautboys played old tunes, but very excellent, though it was now above a hundred years since they had played; and after supper, without losing any time, the lord almoner married them in the chapel of the castle, and the chief lady of honor drew the curtains. They had but very little sleep—the Princess had no occasion; and the Prince left her next morning to return into the city, where his father must needs have been in pain for him. The Prince told him:—

That he had lost his way in the forest as he was hunting, and that he had lain in the cottage of a charcoal-burner, who gave him cheese and brown bread.

The King, his father, who was a good man, believed him: but his mother could not be persuaded it was true, and seeing that he went almost every day a-hunting, and that he always had some excuse ready for so doing, though he had lain out three or four nights together, she began to suspect that he was married; for he lived with the Princess above two whole years, and had by her two children, the eldest of which, who was a daughter, was named Morning, and the youngest, who was a son, they called Day, because he was a great deal handsomer and more beautiful than his sister.

The Queen spoke several times to her son, to inform herself after what manner he did pass his time, and that in this he ought in duty to satisfy her. But he never dared to trust her with his secret: he feared her, though he loved her, for she was of the race of the Ogres, and the King would never have married her had it not been for her vast riches; it was even whispered about the court that she had Ogreish inclinations, and that whenever she saw little children passing by, she had all the difficulty in the world to avoid falling upon them. And so the Prince would never tell her one word.

But when the King was dead, which happened about two years afterwards, and he saw himself lord and master, he openly declared his marriage; and he went in great ceremony to conduct his Queen to the palace. They made a magnificent entry into the capital city, she riding between her two children.

Soon after, the King went to make war with the Emperor Contalabutte, his neighbor. He left the government of the kingdom to the Queen his mother, and earnestly recommended to her care his wife and children. He was obliged to continue his expedition all the summer; and as soon as he departed the Queen-mother sent her daughter-in-law to a country house among the woods, that she might with the more ease gratify her horrible longing.

Some few days afterward she went thither herself, and said to her clerk of the kitchen:—

«I have a mind to eat little Morning for my dinner to-morrow.»

«Ah, madam!» cried the clerk of the kitchen.

«I will have it so,» replied the Queen (and this she spoke in the tone of an Ogress who had a strong desire to eat fresh meat), «and will eat her with a *sauce*, Robert.»

The poor man, knowing very well that he must not play tricks with Ogresses, took his great knife and went up into little Morning's chamber. She was then four years old; and came up to him jumping and laughing, to take him about the neck and ask him for some sugar-candy. Upon which he began to weep, the great knife fell out of his hand, and he went into the back yard and killed a little lamb, and dressed it with such good sauce that his mistress assured him she had never eaten anything so good in her life. He had at the same time taken up little Morning and carried her to his wife, to conceal her in the lodging he had at the bottom of the court-yard.

About eight days afterward the wicked Queen said to the clerk of the kitchen, « I will sup upon little Day. »

He answered not a word, being resolved to cheat her as he had done before. He went to find out little Day, and saw him with a little foil in his hand, with which he was fencing with a great monkey, the child being then only three years of age. He took him up in his arms and carried him to his wife, that she might conceal him in her chamber along with his sister; and in the room of little Day cooked up a young kid, very tender, which the Ogress found to be wonderfully good.

This was hitherto all mighty well; but one evening this wicked Queen said to her clerk of the kitchen:—

« I will eat the Queen with the same sauce I had with her children. »

It was now that the poor clerk of the kitchen despaired of being able to deceive her. The young Queen was turned of twenty, not reckoning the hundred years she had been asleep; and how to find in the yard a beast so firm was what puzzled him. He took then a resolution, that he might save his own life, to cut the Queen's throat; and going up into her chamber, with intent to do it at once, he put himself into as great fury as he could possibly, and came into the young Queen's room with his dagger in his hand. He would not, however, surprise her; but told her, with a great deal of respect, the orders he had received from the Queen-mother.

« Do it; do it » (said she, stretching out her neck). « Execute your orders; and then I shall go and see my children, my poor children, whom I so much and so tenderly loved. »

For she thought them dead ever since they had been taken away without her knowledge.

«No, no, madam» (cried the poor clerk of the kitchen, all in tears): «you shall not die, and yet you shall see your children again; but then you must go home with me to my lodgings, where I have concealed them, and I shall deceive the Queen once more, by giving her in your stead a young hind.»

Upon this he forthwith conducted her to his chamber, where, leaving her to embrace her children and cry along with them, he went and dressed a young hind, which the Queen had for her supper, and devoured it with the same appetite as if it had been the young Queen. Exceedingly was she delighted with her cruelty; and she had invented a story to tell the King, at his return, how the mad wolves had eaten up the Queen his wife and her two children.

One evening, as she was, according to her custom, rambling round about the courts and yards of the palace to see if she could smell any fresh meat, she heard, in a ground room, little Day crying; for his mamma was going to whip him, because he had been naughty: and she heard at the same time little Morning begging pardon for her brother.

The Ogress presently knew the voice of the Queen and her children; and being quite mad that she had been thus deceived, she commanded (with a most horrible voice, which made everybody tremble) that next morning, by break of day, they should bring into the middle of the great court a large tub, which she caused to be filled with toads, vipers, snakes, and all sorts of serpents, in order to have thrown into it the Queen and her children, the clerk of the kitchen, his wife and maid; all whom she had given orders should be brought thither with their hands tied behind them.

They were brought out accordingly, and the executioners were just going to throw them into the tub, when the King (who was not so soon expected) entered the court on horseback (for he came post), and asked with the utmost astonishment what was the meaning of that horrible spectacle.

No one dared to tell him; when the Ogress, all enraged to see what had happened, threw herself head foremost into the tub, and was instantly devoured by the ugly creatures she had ordered to be thrown into it for others. The King could not but be very sorry, for she was his mother; but he soon comforted himself with his beautiful wife and his pretty children.

BLUE BEARD

There was a man who had fine houses, both in town and country, a deal of silver and gold plate, embroidered furniture, and coaches gilded all over with gold. But this man was so unlucky as to have a blue beard, which made him so frightfully ugly that all the women and girls ran away from him.

One of his neighbors, a lady of quality, had two daughters who were perfect beauties. He desired of her one of them in marriage, leaving to her choice which of the two she would bestow on him. They would neither of them have him, and sent him backwards and forwards from one another, not being able to bear the thoughts of marrying a man who had a blue beard; and what besides gave them disgust and aversion was his having already been married to several wives, and nobody ever knew what became of them.

Blue Beard, to engage their affection, took them, with the lady their mother and three or four ladies of their acquaintance, with other young people of the neighborhood, to one of his country seats, where they stayed a whole week.

There was nothing then to be seen but parties of pleasure, hunting, fishing, dancing, mirth, and feasting. Nobody went to bed, but all passed the night in rallying and joking with each other. In short, everything succeeded so well that the youngest daughter began to think the master of the house not to have a beard so very blue, and that he was a mighty civil gentleman.

As soon as they returned home, the marriage was concluded. About a month afterwards, Blue Beard told his wife that he was obliged to take a country journey for six weeks at least, about affairs of very great consequence, desiring her to divert herself in his absence, to send for her friends and acquaintances, to carry them into the country, if she pleased, and to make good cheer wherever she was.

« Here,» said he, « are the keys of the two great wardrobes, wherein I have my best furniture; these are of my silver and gold plate, which is not every day in use; these open my strong boxes, which hold my money, both gold and silver; these my caskets of jewels; and this is the master-key to all my apartments. But for this little one here, it is the key of the closet at the end of the great gallery on the ground floor. Open them all, go into all and every one of them, except that little closet, which I forbid you; and forbid it in such a manner that if you happen to open it, there's nothing but what you may expect from my just anger and resentment."

She promised to observe, very exactly, whatever he had ordered; when he, after having embraced her, got into his coach and proceeded on his journey.

Her neighbors and good friends did not stay to be sent for by the new-married lady, so great was their impatience to see all the rich furniture of her house, not daring to come while her husband was there, because of his blue beard, which frightened them. They ran through all the rooms, closets, and wardrobes, which were all so fine and rich that they seemed to surpass one another.

After that they went up into the two great rooms, where were the best and richest furniture; they could not sufficiently admire the number and beauty of the tapestry, beds, couches, cabinets, stands, tables,— and looking-glasses in which you might see yourself from head to foot; some of them were framed with glass, others with silver, plain and gilded, the finest and most magnificent ever were seen.

They ceased not to extol and envy the happiness of their friend, who in the mean time in no way diverted herself in looking upon all these rich things, because of the impatience she had to go and open the closet on the ground floor. She was so much pressed by her curiosity that without considering that it was very uncivil to leave her company, she went down a little back staircase, and with such excessive haste that she had twice or thrice like to have broken her neck.

Being come to the closet door, she made a stop for some time, thinking upon her husband's orders, and considering what unhappiness might attend her if she was disobedient; but the temptation was so strong she could not overcome it. She then took the little key, and opened it, trembling, but could not at first see anything plainly, because the windows were shut. After some moments she began to perceive that the floor was all covered over with clotted blood, on which lay the bodies of several dead women, ranged against the walls. (These were all the wives whom Blue Beard had married and murdered, one after another.) She thought she should have died for fear; and the key, which she pulled out of the lock, fell out of her hand.

After having somewhat recovered her surprise, she took up the key, locked the door, and went up-stairs into her chamber to recover herself; but she could not, so much was she frightened. Having observed that the key of the closet was stained with blood, she tried two or three times to wipe it off; but the blood would not come out: in vain did she wash it, and even rub it with soap and sand; the blood still remained, for the key was magical and she could never make it quite clean; when the blood was gone off from one side, it came again on the other.

Blue Beard returned from his journey the same evening, and said he had received letters upon the road, informing him that the affair he went about was ended to his advantage. His wife did all she could to convince him she was extremely glad of his speedy return.

Next morning he asked her for the keys, which she gave him, but with such a trembling hand that he easily guessed what had happened.

« What! » said he, « is not the key of my closet among the rest? »

« I must certainly, » said she, « have left it above upon the table. »

« Fail not, » said Blue Beard, « to bring it to me presently. »

After several goings backward and forward she was forced to bring him the key. Blue Beard, having very attentively considered it, said to his wife: —

« How comes this blood upon the key? »

« I do not know, » cried the poor woman, paler than death.

« You do not know! » replied Blue Beard. « I very well know. You were resolved to go into the closet, were you not? Mighty well, madam: you shall go in, and take your place among the ladies you saw there. »

Upon this she threw herself at her husband's feet, and begged his pardon with all the signs of a true repentance, vowing that she would never more be disobedient. She would have melted a rock, so beautiful and sorrowful was she; but Blue Beard had a heart harder than any rock!

« You must die, madam, » said he; « and that presently. »

« Since I must die, » answered she (looking upon him with her eyes all bathed in tears), « give me some little time to say my prayers. »

« I give you, » replied Blue Beard, « half a quarter of an hour, but not one moment more. »

When she was alone she called out to her sister, and said to her:—

«Sister Anne» (for that was her name), «go up, I beg you, upon the top of the tower, and look if my brothers are not coming; they promised me that they would come to-day, and if you see them, give them a sign to make haste.»

Her sister Anne went up upon the top of the tower, and the poor afflicted wife cried out from time to time:—

«Anne, sister Anne, do you see any one coming?»

And sister Anne said:—

«I see nothing but the sun, which makes a dust, and the grass, which looks green.»

In the mean while Blue Beard, holding a great sabre in his hand, cried out as loud as he could bawl to his wife:—

«Come down instantly, or I shall come up to you.»

«One moment longer, if you please,» said his wife; and then she cried out very softly, «Anne, sister Anne, dost thou see anybody coming?»

And sister Anne answered:—

«I see nothing but the sun, which makes a dust, and the grass, which is green.»

«Come down quickly,» cried Blue Beard, «or I will come up to you.»

«I am coming,» answered his wife; and then she cried, «Anne, sister Anne, dost thou not see any one coming?»

«I see,» replied sister Anne, «a great dust, which comes on this side here.»

«Are they my brothers?»

«Alas! no, my dear sister: I see a flock of sheep.»

«Will you not come down?» cried Blue Beard.

«One moment longer,» said his wife, and then she cried out, «Anne, sister Anne, dost thou see nobody coming?»

«I see,» said she, «two horsemen; but they are yet a great way off.»

«God be praised,» replied the poor wife joyfully: «they are my brothers; I will make them a sign, as well as I can, for them to make haste.»

Then Blue Beard bawled out so loud that he made the whole house tremble. The distressed wife came down, and threw herself at his feet, all in tears, with her hair about her shoulders.

«This signifies nothing,» says Blue Beard: «you must die;» then, taking hold of her hair with one hand, and lifting up the sword with the other, he was going to take off her head. The poor lady, turning about to him, and looking at him with dying eyes, desired him to afford her one little moment to recollect herself.

« No, no,» said he, « recommend thyself to God; » and was just ready to strike.

At this very instant there was such a loud knocking at the gate that Blue Beard made a sudden stop. The gate was opened, and presently entered two horsemen, who, drawing their swords, ran directly to Blue Beard. He knew them to be his wife's brothers,—one a dragoon, the other a musketeer; so that he ran away immediately to save himself: but the two brothers pursued so close that they overtook him before he could get to the steps of the porch, when they ran their swords through his body and left him dead. The poor wife was almost as dead as her husband, and had not strength enough to rise and welcome her brothers.

Blue Beard had no heirs, and so his wife became mistress of all his estate. She made use of one part of it to marry her sister Anne to a young gentleman who had loved her a long while; another part to buy captains' commissions for her brothers; and the rest to marry herself to a very worthy gentleman, who made her forget the ill time she had passed with Blue Beard.

TOADS AND DIAMONDS

THERE was once upon a time a widow who had two daughters. The eldest was like herself in face and humor. Both were so disagreeable and so proud that there was no living with them. The youngest, who was the very picture of her father for courtesy and sweetness of temper, was withal one of the most beautiful girls ever seen. As people naturally love their own likeness, this mother doted on her eldest daughter, and had a horrible aversion for the youngest: she made her eat in the kitchen and work continually.

Among other things, this poor child was forced twice a day to draw water above a mile and a half off the house, and bring home a pitcher full of it. One day, as she was at this fountain, there came to her a poor woman, who begged of her to let her drink.

«Oh! ay, with all my heart, Goody,» said this pretty little girl; and immediately rinsing the pitcher, she took up some water from the clearest place of the fountain and gave it to her, holding up the pitcher all the while that she might drink the easier.

The good woman having drunk, said to her, «You are so very pretty, my dear, so good and so mannerly, that I cannot help giving you a gift.» For this was a fairy, who had taken the form of a poor countrywoman to see how far the civility and good manners of this pretty girl would go. «I will give you for gift, that at every word you speak, there shall come out of your mouth either a flower or a jewel.»

[When this occurred on her return, the mother at once sent the elder sister, with the best silver tankard, to the fountain on the same errand; which she resented as menial's work.]

[The elder sister] was no sooner at the fountain than she saw coming out of the wood a lady most gloriously dressed, who came up to her and asked to drink. This was the very fairy who appeared to her sister, but had now taken the air and dress of a princess to see how far this girl's rudeness would go.

«Am I come hither,» said the proud, saucy slut, «to serve you with water, pray? I suppose the silver tankard was brought purely for your Ladyship, was it? However, you may drink out of it if you have a fancy.»

The fairy answered without putting herself in a passion, «Since you have so little breeding and are so disobliging, I give you for gift that at every word you speak there shall come out of your mouth a snake or a toad.»

[This also occurring, the mother blamed and beat the younger sister, who ran away and hid in the forest, where the king's son met her and asked why she was alone there weeping.]

[Said the younger sister,] «Alas, sir! my mamma has turned me out of doors.»

The king's son, who saw five or six pearls and as many diamonds come out of her mouth, desired her to tell him how that happened. She hereupon told him the whole story; and so the king's son fell in love with her, and considering with himself that such a gift was worth more than any marriage portion, conducted her to the palace of the king his father, and there married her.

As for her sister, she made herself so much hated that her own mother turned her off; and the miserable wretch, having wandered about a good while without finding anybody to take her in, went to a corner of the wood, and there died.

PERSIUS (AULUS PERSIUS FLACCUS)

(34–62 A. D.)

The fame of Persius is perhaps more difficult to account for than that of any other equally eminent author. His brief life was chiefly spent under the crushing tyranny of the worst among the early Cæsars. Real freedom of speech was impossible. Persius, as he himself confesses, was not a true singer. He had not the poet's joyous creative imagination. Even the claim of originality, in style or in substance, is denied him. His voice—thinner, shriller, less articulate than his master's—is still the voice of Horace; and he lashes essentially the same foibles, though with a far more savage swing of the whip. Had Lucilius's satires survived, they would probably have reduced to still smaller space the claims of Persius to originality. The work of the latter is immature and fragmentary, consisting of six satires, only six hundred and fifty hexameters in all, to which should be added the fourteen «limping iambics» of the modest, but perhaps spurious, Epilogue.

NERONE
S C C III PP

Persius

Yet the fact remains, that Persius has held firmly his position as third in rank among Latin satirists. This, moreover, is the one field wherein the Romans acknowledged no Hellenic models or masters. Hardly any ancient poet survives in better or more numerous manuscripts. Few have a more brilliant line of modern editors, from Casaubon to Conington and Gildersleeve. This can be no mere accident, still less the favoritism shown to a popular young aristocrat. Something of vitality the little book must have had.

Our first impression is of extreme incoherence and obscurity. Yet in this there is nothing of pedantic willfulness. The note of sincerity, the strident intolerant sincerity of youth, pierces our ear quickly, despite all the inarticulate verbiage. Even in this brief career too we seem to trace a line of progress toward calmer, clearer, more genial self-utterance. Especially the tender lines to his old tutor Cornutus leave us «wishing for more»; which is perhaps the rarest triumph of the satirist, in particular. Professor Conington declares that as Lucretius represents Epicureanism in poetry, so Persius stands no less completely for Roman Stoicism. The concession is at once added, however, that Divine Philosophy, in that unhappy age, could teach little more than manly endurance of the inevitable.

Altogether,—unless we confess that obscurity itself may draw the thronging commentators till they darken the very air above it,—we must consider that Persius offers us one more illustration that the fearless frank word of the austere moralist is never hopelessly out of season, but may re-echo for evermore. Or, to change the figure:—

> «How far that little candle throws its beams!
> So shines a good deed in a naughty world.»

The edition of Persius by Professor Gildersleeve (Harper, 1875) is especially valuable for its linguistic and stylistic comment; the more as Persius, like Plautus and Catullus, used more largely than the other poets that *lingua volgare* from which the Romance languages take their direct descent. The more indolent student, however, will find his way to Conington's edition, more recently revised by Nettleship, which includes a capital prose translation on parallel pages. To this graceful version the present translator confesses his heavy indebtedness.

THE AUTHOR'S AMBITION

We write, locked in,—one prose, another verse;
Of lofty style, that may be panted forth
With liberal lung. Yes, to the folk, some day,
Spruce in your fresh new toga, all in white,
Wearing your birthday ring, from some high seat
These things you hope to read, after your throat
Is gargled clear with trills, yourself o'ercome,
With swimming eyes! The sturdy Romans then,
Losing all dignity of mien and voice,
You'd fain see quivering, while the verses glide
Into their bones; their marrow tickled by
The rippling strain!
What! an old man like you
Would gather tidbits up for alien ears,
Yourself, at last wearied, to cry «Enough»?
So much for pallor and austerity!
Oh, evil day! Is then your knowledge worth
So little, unless others know you know?

But it *is* pleasant to be pointed at
With the forefinger, and to hear, «*That's he!*
Ay, there he goes!» Would you not like to be
By a full hundred curly-headed boys
Conned as their lesson?
Lo, the heroic sons
Of Romulus sit at their wine, full-fed,
To hear the tale of sacred Poesy.
Some fellow, with a hyacinthine robe
Over his shoulders, with a snuffling lisp
Utters some mawkish stuff, of Phyllises,
Hypsipylas, or whate'er heroines
By bard bewailed. The gentry add their praise;—
And now the poet's dust is happy? Now
The stone is resting lighter on his bones?
The humbler guests applaud; and from his tomb
And blessed ashes and his Manes now
Shall not the violets spring?

A CHILD'S TRICK

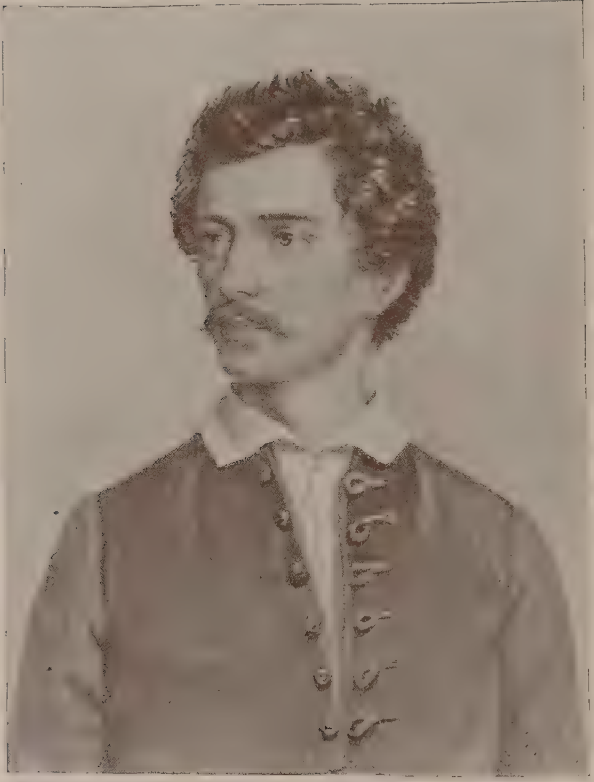
I OFTEN touched my eyes, I recollect,
With oil, in boyhood, if I did not wish
To learn by heart the dying Cato's words;
Which my daft master loudly would applaud,
And with a glow of pride my father heard
As I recited to his gathered friends.

«WE TWA»

I SPEAK not to the throng. I give my heart—
As the Muse bids me—unto you to sift.
It is my joy to show, O sweet my friend,
To you, how large a part of me is yours.
Strike, and with caution test how much rings true,
What is mere plaster of a varnished tongue.
A hundred voices I might dare to crave,
That I in clearest utterance might reveal
How in my heart's recesses you are fixed.
So might my words all that unseal which lies,
Not to be uttered, in my heart-strings hid. . . .

Just where the path of life uncertain grows,
And cross-ways lead the doubtful mind astray,
I gave myself to you. My tender years
To your Socratic bosom you received,
Cornutus. . . .
I remember well
How the long summer suns I spent with you,
And with you plucked the early hours of night
For our repast. One task there was for both;
Our rest we took together, and relaxed
Our graver fancies at our frugal meal.

[The foregoing translations were made for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature› by W. C. Lawton.]



PETÖFI.

ALEXANDER PETÖFI

(1823–1849)

BY CHARLES HARVEY GENUNG

Like most of the Continental poets who rose to fame during the first half of the nineteenth century, Petöfi brought to the work of poetic creation the glow of a passionate patriotism. As Leopardi put into song the dreams of a united Italy, as Mickiewicz strengthened the proud heart of vanquished Poland, and as Körner sang and died for the liberation of his fatherland, so Petöfi fired the patriotism of Hungary, and found an unmarked grave upon the battle-field of her liberties. No other singer of any land has ever become in so intimate a sense the universal poet of his people as this greatest of Hungarian bards. Burns holds in the hearts of Scotchmen approximately the place that Petöfi has won in the affections of his ardent countrymen. But Petöfi means more to Hungary than Burns to Scotland. He was not the poet only, but the popular hero as well. His brilliant successes, his romantic career, his fascinating character, and his mysterious disappearance on the field of battle, before he had completed his twenty-seventh year, have thrown a mystic glamour over his name. His career was meteoric though his glory is permanent. He himself vanished like a wandering star, and the spot where he fell no man knows. For years it was believed that he still went up and down the land in disguise, and many false Petöfis put forth poems under that charmed name. The report that he had been captured by the Russians and exiled to Siberia caused intense excitement, not in Hungary alone, but throughout Germany and Austria. There can be little doubt, however, that he was buried in the general trench with fellow patriots unnumbered and unknown.

Alexander Petöfi was born in the small village of Kis-Körös in the early New Year's morning of 1823. In the veins of this intensely national poet of Hungary there flowed not a drop of Hungarian blood. His father, a well-to-do butcher, was a Serbian named Petrovics; his mother was a Slovenian. His temperament and character, however, were entirely Hungarian. He was ashamed of the Slavic sound of his family name, and both as actor and as poet he assumed various appellations. His growing fame decided him to adopt the name which he has immortalized, of Petöfi. His nature was wild and wayward. He led a wanderer's life, and played many rôles. He was student, actor, soldier, vagabond. It was the persistent mistake of his life that, like Wilhelm Meister, he believed himself to be an actor, and through the most humiliating experiences he clung to this error. In the midst, however, of his most sordid trials, his efforts to attain self-culture were put forth with an unremitting energy almost pathetic. In his knapsack he carried Shakespeare, Schiller, and Homer. At the age of nineteen he had mastered the most difficult metres of the ancients, and acquired a good knowledge of the chief modern languages. In Paza, he formed with Jókai the statesman and novelist, and Orlai the artist, an interesting circle. Jókai gives an amusing account of the hallucinations which blinded each of the three as to his special capability. Orlai, who has won fame as a painter, believed himself a poet; the actor Petöfi declaimed his lines; while Jókai, believing himself an artist, furnished the illustrations.

It was Vörösmarty, the senior poet of Hungary, who first recognized Petöfi's genius and set it right. He was one of the editors of the chief Hungarian magazine, the Athenæum, and here in 1842 appeared Petöfi's first poem. In 1844 a collection of the poems was brought out in book form, and their instant and wide-spread success justified Vörösmarty's judgment. The new poet was received with universal acclaim, and developed a lyric productivity little less than marvelous. He wrote several excellent village tales, a novel called ‹The Hangman's Rope,› and two dramas which were failures. His studies in foreign literatures bore fruit in numerous translations. His version of Shakespeare's ‹Coriolanus› has become a part of the regular repertoire of the Hungarian stage. But it was in the 1775 lyric poems that Petöfi's true genius appeared. He was a poet in the simplest purest sense, and thousands to whom his name was yet unknown sang his songs at fair and festival. They seemed like the spontaneous expression of the people themselves, who had waited for their appointed mouthpiece. Faithfulness and naturalness distinguish his poetry. He was the first to free himself from the scholastic formalism which had theretofore dominated Hungarian literature, and so incurred at the hands of conservative criticism the charge of vulgarity. What he did was to show that the simple, the childlike, and the natural were compatible with the genuinely poetical. A shadow of the spirit of Heine and Byron fell upon Petöfi's verse, but does not characterize it; and to his personality attached the same fascinating charm that they excited. His love adventures were manifold, and many a fair maiden has been celebrated by exquisite poems, in which no impure note is ever struck. Every poem bears the stamp of actual experience and genuine feeling. In the simple language of every-day life Petöfi has sung of the sorrows, the aspirations, the loves, and the gayety of the Hungarian people; in his verse is the passionate glow, the melancholy, and the humor of the race; it is the purest expression of the national temperament and character. Herman Grimm has not hesitated to declare that Petöfi ranks "among the very greatest poets of all times and tongues." It is a singular fact that with all his superb lyric quality and musical lilt, Petöfi had no ear or taste for music.

The year 1847 marked the culmination of the poet's happiness and success. A richly printed edition of his collected poems appeared, and their beauty in the mass silenced forever the voice of adverse criticism. In that year he married, and in that year he found the best friend of his life,—the epic poet Arany. About the laurel crown of the national poet were soon to be twined the oak wreaths also of a national hero. The ideas which inspired the revolution of 1849 were dimly foreshadowed in some of Petöfi's earlier poems. To his efforts and to those of Jókai it was chiefly due that the celebrated reform programme, with the twelve demands of the Hungarian nation, was drawn up and adopted. On March 15th, 1848, was published the first work that appeared under the new laws establishing the freedom of the press. This was Petöfi's famous song 'Talpra Magyar' (Up, Magyar), the Hungarian Marseillaise. It was the beginning of a series of impassioned revolutionary lyrics. The articles which Petöfi contributed to the newspapers at that time are valuable historical documents of the revolution. In September 1848 he entered the army, and served under General Bem, whose adjutant he became. He had no qualifications for a soldier's career except a passionate patriotism and unshrinking courage. His erratic nature would not conform to the strictness of military discipline; but to the poet whom the nation idolized, large liberties were accorded, and in hours of peril he displayed heroic qualities. He fought at the great battle of Szegesvár on July 31st, 1849, in which the Hungarians were defeated; and he has never been seen since. His grave is with the unknown; and the wish which he uttered in song, that flowers should be scattered where he rests, must remain forever unfulfilled. A fairer and more enduring tribute is the love his people bear him. His poetry is a national treasure, which Hungary cherishes as a sacred possession.

Chas. H. Genung

MASTER PAUL

Master Paul was angry: in his ire
Threw his hat,
Like a log, into the blazing fire—
What of that?
Talked about his wife till he was hoarse:
«Curse her—I'll apply for a divorce!
No! I'll chase her out of doors instead;»—
And he did exactly what he said.

Master Paul got cooler after that—
Very cool!
«What a fool to throw away my hat—
What a fool!
What a fool to drive her from the door!
Now I shall be poorer than before;
For she kept the house, and earned her bread;»—
And it was exactly as he said.

Master Paul got angrier, angrier yet:
Took his hat,
Flung it from him in his passionate pet—
What of that?
«Toil and trouble is man's wretched lot,
And one more misfortune matters not:
Let it go—unsheltered be my head;»—
And he did exactly as he said.

Freed from all this world's anxieties,
Master Paul
Pulled his hat indignant o'er his eyes—
«All, yes! all,
All is gone, my partner and my pelf:
Naught is left me but to hang myself,
So of all my troubling cares get rid;»—
And exactly as he said, he did.

SONG OF LAMENT

OH, WITH what fascinating bursts and swells
Breaks out the music of the village bells,
Upon the ear of the roused peasant falling,
And to the church devotions gently calling!
What sweet remembrances that music brings
Of early thoughts and half-forgotten things:
Things half forgotten, yet on these past dreams
Distinct, as living life, one figure beams
In brightness and in youthful beauty — she
Sleeps her long sleep beneath the willow-tree;
There I my never-wearied vigils keep,
And there I weep, and cannot cease to weep.

MAY-NIGHT

NIGHT of May! thou night of peace and silence,
When the moonlight silvers the starred vault;
Tell me then, blonde maiden! blue-eyed floweret,
Shining pearl! what thoughts thy heart assault.

Mine are misty dreamings, passing shadows;
But they keep me sleepless — crowning me
Like the monarch of a mighty kingdom,
And the crown is held, dear maid! is held by thee.

What a theft it were, and what a contrast
With the trashy purse that thieves purloin,
Could I steal these dreams, and then convert them
Into solid and substantial coin!

DREAMING

IS IT a dream that shows me
Yonder vision airy?
Is she a mortal maiden?
Is she a spirit fairy?

Whether maiden or fairy,
Little indeed I care,
Would she only love me,
Smiling sweetly there.

FAITHFULNESS

There on the mountain a rose-blossom blows;
Bend o'er my bosom thy forehead which glows;
Whisper, O whisper sweet words in mine ear,
Say that thou lovest me,— what rapture to hear!

Down on the Danube the evening sun sinks,
Gilding the wavelets that dance on its brinks;
As the sweet river has cradled the sun,
Cradled I rest upon thee, lovely one!

I have been slandered, the slanderers declare;—
Let God forgive them,—I utter no prayer;
Now let them listen, while prayerful I pour
All my heart's offerings on her I adore.

A VOW

I'll be a tree, if thou wilt be its blossom;
I'll be a flower, if thou wilt be its dew;
I'll be the dew, if thou wilt be the sunbeam;
Where'er thou art, let me be near thee too.
Wert thou the heaven of blue, beloved maiden,
I a fixed star in that blue heaven would be;
And wert thou doomed to hell itself, dear woman,
I'd seek perdition to be near to thee.

SORROW AND JOY

And what is sorrow? 'Tis a boundless sea.
And what is joy?
A little pearl in that deep ocean's bed;
I sought it—found it—held it o'er my head,
And to my soul's annoy,
It fell into the ocean's depth again,
And now I look and long for it in vain.

WIFE AND SWORD

A dove upon the house-roof,
Above in heaven a star;
Thou on my bosom sleeping,—
How sweet thy breathings are!

Soft as the morning dewdrops
Upon the rose leaves fall,
Thou in my arms reposest,
My love, my wife, my all!

Why should I not embrace thee
With kisses manifold?
My lips are rich with kisses,
So gushing, so untold.

We talk, we toy, we trifle,
We revel in love's bliss;
And snatch at every breathing
A kiss — another kiss.

But who that bliss can measure,
Sparkling in every glance?
It crests thy lips with beauty,
It lights thy countenance.

I look upon my sabre,
'Tis idly hung above;
And does it not reproach me —
« Why so absorbed in love? »

Thou old — thou young companion!
So wildly looking down;
I hear thy voice of anger,
I see thy threatening frown.

« Shame — shame on thee, deserter!
Thus trifling with a wife;
Awake! thy country calls thee
For liberty, for life.»

And I — « She is so lovely,
So witching, so divine,—
The gift of heavenly beauty,
This angel-love of mine!

«Oh, recognize the mission,
   Intrusted from the sky,
To this celestial envoy,
   And hail her embassy.»

She heard the word; she echoed
   That word—«‘The Fatherland!’
I buckle on the sabre,
   With mine own plighted hand.

«I charge thee, save thy country—
   ’Tis mine, ’tis thine—for both;
Off to the field of victory,
   And there redeem thy troth.»

OUR COUNTRY

The sun went down, but not a starlet
   Appeared in heaven,—all dark above;
No light around, except the taper
   Dim glimmering, and my homely love.

That homely love's a star in heaven
   That shines around both near and far,
A home of sadness—sad Hungaria!
   Where wilt thou find that lovely star?

And now my taper flickers faintly,
   And midnight comes; but in the gleam,
Faint as it is, I see a shadow
   Which half reveals a future dream.

It brightens as the daybreak brightens
   Each flame brings forth a mightier flame;
There stand two figures in the nimbus,—
   Old Magyar honor, Magyar fame.

O Magyars! look not on your fathers,
   But bid them hide their brows in night;
Your eyes are weak, those suns are dazzling,
   Ye cannot bear that blasting light.

Time was those ancient, honored fathers
   Could speak the threatening, thundering word;
’Twas like the bursting of the storm-wind,
   And Europe, all responsive, heard!

Great was the Magyar then: his country
Honored, his name a history
Of glory,—now a star extinguished,
A fallen star in Magyar sea.

'Twas long ago the laurel garland
Was round the Magyar forehead bound;
Shall fancy, eagle-pinioned, ever
See Magyar hero-brow recrowned?

That laurel crown so long has faded,
So long thy light has ceased to gleam,
Thy greatness seems a myth, thy story
A fable of the past—a dream!

Long have mine eyes been dry and tearless,
But now I weep; and can it be
That these are dews of spring—the dawning
Of brighter days for Hungary?

And can it—can it be a meteor,
That for a moment burst and blazed,
Lighted with brightness all the heavens,
And sunk in darkness while we gazed?

No! 'tis a comet, whose returning
Is sure as is the march of doom;
Hungary shall hail it, blazing, burning,—
It cannot, will not fail to come.

ONE ONLY THOUGHT

One thought torments me sorely—'tis that I
Pillowed on a soft bed of down may die;
Fade slowly, like a flower, and pass away
Under the gentle pressure of decay;
Paling as pales a fading, flickering light
In the dark, lonesome solitude of night.
O God! let not my Magyar name
Be linked with such a death of shame;
No! rather let it be
A lightning-struck, uprooted tree—
A rock, which, torn from mountain-brow,
Comes rattling, thundering down below.

Where every fettered race, tired with their chains,
Muster their ranks and seek the battle plains,
And with red flushes the red flag unfold,
The sacred signal there inscribed in gold,—
  «For the world's liberty!»
And far and wide the summons to be free
Fills east and west, and to the glorious fight
Heroes press forward, battling for the right,—
  There will I die!
There drowned in mine own heart's blood lie,
Poured out so willingly; th' expiring voice,
Even in its own extinction shall rejoice.
While the sword's clashing, and the trumpet's sound,
And rifles and artillery thunder round;
  Then may the trampling horse
  Gallop upon my corse,
When o'er the battle-field the warriors fly.
There let me rest till glorious victory
Shall crown the right; my bones upgathered be
At the sublime interment of the free!
When million voices shout their elegy
Under the unfurled banners waving high;
On the gigantic grave which covers all
  The heroes, who for freedom fall,
And welcome death because they die for thee,
All holy! world-delivering liberty!

INDIFFERENCE

«With calm indifference good and evil bear:»
  So saith the sage, and so the world replies;
  But not too wisely—'tis not my device;
Pleasures and pains, my comfort and my care,
Must leave their impress, both of ill and good:
  My soul is not a flood
Equally moved, when a sweet infant throws
  O'er me a scattered rose,
  As when the whirlwind brings
Down from the forest a torn trunk, and flings
It furiously upon my wanderings.

The above translations are all by Sir John Bowring.

PETRARCH.

PETRARCH

(1304–1374)

BY J. F. BINGHAM

The second of the «Great Four» poets of Italy occupied with his life more than two-thirds of the fourteenth century; being at once widely influential in its affairs of State, as well as its leading man of letters, and by far its most illustrious poet. He was for his first seventeen years a contemporary with the first and greatest of the four, and like him, by inheritance, of the party of the Bianchi and an exile from Florence; and affected, though in a milder measure, by political vicissitudes, which to a large extent determined, as in the case of his great predecessor, the direction of his activities and the destiny and happiness of his life.

The times, of which both were in an important sense the product, were fast changing, and already much changed from those which had shaped Dante's career. Clement V. in 1305 transferred the seat of the popes to Avignon. The Empire, the shadow of a great name, had begun its decline in Italy. It made its last struggles in the chivalrous enterprises of Henry VII. of Luxemburg; failed in 1313 by the successful resistance of the Florentines; and the coming of Louis of Bavaria in 1323 did not avail to raise it up. The Guelfs were strong again by the power of Florence, and of Robert, King of Naples. The national arms were declining; and the volunteer «companies» (*le compagnie di ventura*) were getting a greater footing in Italy — composed at first of foreigners, later also of Italians, affecting and worrying Petrarch to the last degree. They were mercenary bands, to whom warfare was a trade to live by, and who hired themselves out to various princes, dukes, etc.; and many cities by their aid were setting out to become independent dominions, lordships, marquisates, dukedoms, etc. The Visconti, victorious over the Torriani, were coming to the front in Milan; at Verona, the Scaligers — the family of Este, with whom, two hundred years later, the destiny of Tasso is to be so tragically commingled — were establishing their splendid marquisate at Ferrara. At Florence, the Duke of Athens, attempting to secure the lordship there, was put down; and with him the nobles went under, the common people and the merchants came uppermost, and the supremacy of the Medici was gradually prepared. The republics of Genoa and Venice contended in bitter warfare, and the latter rose to supremacy upon the land as well as by sea.

In these troublous times of transition and tumult, though an exile and wanderer like Dante before him (with less suffering indeed from external causes), his remarkable personal beauty, his natural *bonhomie*, his enormous learning, his vast general knowledge, his intense patriotism, and his marvelous industry, brought him to exert an astonishing influence over the great and powerful, and to live in the veneration and friendship of the noblest and most exalted in the world. He could count among personal friends several popes; the Correggios, lords of Parma, the Colonnas of Rome, the Visconti of Milan, the Carraras of Padua, the Gonzagas of Mantua; Robert, King of Naples; the Emperor Charles IV. He was invited in turn by them all, was consulted by them, was employed by them on important matters of State. He was sent by the nobles and people of Rome to Clement VI. on the great endeavor to persuade him to remove his residence from Avignon to Rome. Although this effort was unsuccessful, he afterward wrote a letter in Latin to Clement's successor, Urban V., urging the same request; and he soon after removed to Rome. In short, his opportunities in the character of the age, and his own qualifications in respect of statesmanship, learning, and the poetic gift, were so extraordinary, and were improved by him with such tireless activity, that his influence upon his contemporaries in each direction was prodigious and unique, and his contemporary reputation almost or quite unparalleled.

The family of Petrarch came from Incisa nel Valdarno, a little hamlet some twenty-five miles southeast of Florence; and was of the *gente nuovo* (new folk) of Florence. Francesco's father was Master Petracco or Petraccolo (Peter), son of Garzo, of whom our Petrarch speaks reverently.

Petracco, whose name the son afterwards Latinized as his own cognomen into Petrarch, was «cancelliere delle riformagione»; an officer of the law somewhat corresponding to the modern English «clerk of court,» but with larger duties. As a «Guelfo Bianco» (White Guelph), or moderate partisan of the Pope, he had been banished in 1302, and had fled for refuge to Arezzo, some thirty-five miles beyond Incisa in the same direction; and here on the 20th of July, 1304, was born to him the son Francesco,—it is uncertain whether by Niccolosa Sigoli or by Eletta Canigiani, or whether in either case the nuptials were ever blessed by the Church. In those days of confusion there was much irregularity in such matters even among fairly good people. Francesco passed the first seven years with the mother at Incisa; afterward he followed the father and the family to Pisa.

Here he began his first studies, which were to tower to such a marvelous height, under the famous grammarian Convonevole da Prato; then, so happily for him, living in Pisa. Whether from choice, or being still too near to Florence for safety, the exiled father and partisan churchman removed, and established his family, consisting of the mother and certainly one brother of Francesco, in Avignon in France, the then home of the wandering popes. Happily again for Francesco, now between twelve and fifteen years of age, Convonevole had come into France, and settled at Carpentras, some fifteen miles northeast of Avignon. Here he was sent by the father to pursue his studies under his old preceptor. In 1319 he was sent to Montpellier, to begin the study of jurisprudence, which he afterward carried forward in Bologna. He had never felt any inclination toward legal science, but was to the highest degree fond of the study of literature. Absorbed in this, his legal studies naturally suffered. By abstemious living and denying himself many comforts, he had also acquired a considerable number of valuable manuscripts of the Greek and Latin authors, which were rare and costly in that age. His father, however, was not pleased that for the sake of these classics he should neglect the legal studies, which were then the principal road to preferment and wealth: and during a visit to his father in 1325 (as the poet himself relates in his 'Old Man's Memories'), the father burned many of these precious books, and only left, through the prayers and tears of the son, Cicero's 'De Oratore' and the works of Virgil; which books became, from that moment to his dying day, those which he loved above all others. After the death of his father, which happened in 1326 while he was still a student at Bologna, he returned to make his home at Avignon; and soon entered into the ecclesiastical state. Although he was never in any but minor orders, he obtained during his life many benefices. The indispensable requirements of this condition were, the tonsure, the clerical dress, and the daily recitation of the «Divine office.» His breviary is still preserved in the library of the Vatican. He continued his favorite studies in Avignon; solacing himself in a youthful way, he regretfully tells us, in the gallant and licentious life of that city.

During the first year of his settled residence here occurred the event which was destined, more than any other through the rest of his life, to influence his thoughts, his writings, and his happiness. He himself tells us that on Good Friday, in the year 1327, being in the church of the convent of St. Claire, in Avignon, he was struck by the beauty of a young lady near him, younger than himself, in a green mantle sprinkled with violets, on which her golden hair fell in plaited tresses. She was distinguished from all others by her proud and delicate carriage. From this moment was conceived in his heart an infinite admiration and love for her. He says her name was Laura, but her family name he never mentions. There has been much discussion and controversy as to who this lady was, or even whether she ever had any other reality than the fervid allegorical idea in the poet's brain. But he tells us that she was nineteen years old and had been two years married; and from many allusions of his own and the words of contemporaries, it seems almost certain that she was in fact the daughter of Audibert de Noves, and the wife of Hugues de Sade, and became the mother of fully eleven children. She died in 1348, a victim of the plague.

When the news of her death reached Petrarch, at the time traveling in Italy, he wrote in Latin the following notice of her as a marginal note in his own favorite copy of Virgil, still preserved in the Ambrosian Library at Milan:—

> «It was in the prime of my youth, on the 6th of April, at the first hour of the day [the variable ecclesiastical day] in the year 1327, that Laura, distinguished by her virtues, and celebrated in my verses, in the Church of St. Clara at Avignon first appeared to my eyes. In the same city and at the same hour, in the year 1348, this bright luminary disappeared from the world. Alas, I was then at Verona, ignorant of my wretchedness! Her chaste and beautiful body was laid, the same day, after vespers, in the Church of the Cordeliers. Her soul returned to its home in heaven. I have written this with mingled pleasure and pain, retracing in this book, so often before my eyes, the sad memory of my great loss; that I may constantly remember that there is nothing more left me to live for, since my strongest tie to life has been broken, and may easily renounce this empty and transitory world, and consider, being freed from my bonds, that it is time for me to flee from Babylon.»

He had endeavored from the first to stifle his passion, or at least to restrain it within the limits of peaceful admiration and friendship, by a prodigious intensity of serious studies, and at the same time by giving vent to it through a continual stream of sonnets, in which her beauty and worth constituted the supporting thread, around which was woven an ever new and incredible variety of elegant poetic conceits. Unappeased by these means, he sought relief from the tempestuous disquiet of his soul in gathering an extensive library of classical manuscripts, traveling abroad in Italy, France, Germany, Spain, in search of such especially as were accounted lost. He discovered in these journeys the ‹Institutions› of Quintilian at Arezzo; Cicero's ‹Familiar Letters› at Verona; his ‹Letters to Atticus› somewhere else, and some lost ‹Orations› at Liège; and he speaks of having seen, though they have not come down to us, Cicero's treatise ‹On Fame,› and Varro's ‹On Divine and Human Things,› and the ‹Letters of Augustus.›

In these prodigious and useful and beautiful activities he became everywhere known, and was the wonder and admiration of his age. But the wound of his heart was not to be cured by the ecstasies of poetry, nor the refinements of literature, nor the curiosities of learning, nor the admiration of men. The beautiful magnet at Avignon drew him always back; and that he might be near her, and at the same time be relieved of the presence of the revelry and vice of that shameful court, he built a home in the beautiful and romantic neighboring valley of Vaucluse. This home, which he called such for fully eleven years, became to him the dearest of all, and excited his best inspirations.

However strange to us to-day (especially us of northern blood), it was and is beyond doubt that the external relations of these celebrated lovers to one another were unimpeachable. Moreover, there are the strongest reasons to believe, from recorded facts and from what we know of his external life and of the intimate workings of his heart, that after some possible weaknesses in the ebullitions of youth,—particularly at Avignon, before his first sight of Laura,—he lived ever afterward with conscientious jealousy against all the excesses of luxury of every sort.

As an ecclesiastic, he was debarred from matrimony accompanied with the lawful benediction of the Church. But it is well known, from his writings, that Petrarch did not in his heart accept all the teachings of the Church in his day, especially in matters of discipline; and this was only a matter of discipline, not of faith. At all events, among his other struggles for external innocence and heart rest he formed a permanent connection with another woman, who bore him a son and a daughter, whom he publicly recognized and treated with the greatest tenderness. The son, whom he placed under the most celebrated teachers, and from whom he hoped great things but realized only regrets, died in early manhood. The daughter Tullia, characteristically named after Cicero's famous daughter, who became a great comfort to him in his old age, was well married in Milan; and by his will he made her husband, Francesco da Brossano, his principal heir.

For the next ten years, though always in motion, he called Vaucluse his home; and from thence poured forth many of his most noted productions. Among these was the Latin heroic poem 'Africa,' which shook with applause the learned world, and gained for him the most highly prized honor of his life,—his coronation, on the Campidoglio at Rome, laureate of the Christian world. On the 1st of September, 1340, this honor was offered him by the University of Paris; and a vote of the Roman Senate invited him to receive it on the Capitol Hill. It filled his heart most of all with infinite joy that it came in Laura's lifetime, and that she sweetly and proudly sympathized in this his unparalleled glory. He went by way of Naples, where his royal friend Robert added a sort of *ad eundem;* and then he passed on to the capital of the world. On the 8th of April, Easter Day, 1341, in the square in front of the remains of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, the crown of laurel, with great solemnity, was placed upon his head by the hands of a Senator of Rome, in the presence and amid the tremendous acclamations of a vast and distinguished assembly, the braying of trumpets, and strains of martial music. Petrarch then pronounced an oration on 'Poetry and Fame.' When all was over, he carried the crown to St. Peter's and set it upon the altar, an offering of pious gratitude and joy.

The remainder of his external life is mostly a record of journeys and removals and brief sojourns in France and Northern Italy. Besides Vaucluse, he had houses at Parma, at Modena, at Bologna, at Verona, at Milan, at Venice, at Padua; whence he made his last removal in 1370 to Arquà del Monte, a most romantic little village among the Euganean Hills. In the outskirts even of this sequestered hamlet, he set an orchard, planted a garden, and built a modest house, which, with some reminiscences of its illustrious owner, such as faded frescoes in allusion to his poems, is still accessible to visitors,—the only one of all his residences which can to-day be identified. Here, on the 20th day of July, 1374, his seventieth birthday, he was found by his friend Lombardo da Serico dead in his study, with his head reclined on a book. He had a grand funeral, and was buried in front of the village church. His monument is a sarcophagus on short columns of red marble. Upon it is a more recent bust of the poet. Beneath is the following rhymed hexameter triplet:—

«Frigida Francisci lapis hic tegit ossa Petrarci.
Suscipe Virgo parens animam! Sate virgine, parce!
Fessaque nam terris celi requiescat in arce.»

The substance of which is:—

This stone covers the mortal remains of Francis Petrarch;
O Virgin mother, receive his soul! Son of the Virgin, have mercy on it!
His earthly life was weary; let him have rest in the heavenly temple.

In enormous and almost incredible learning, as well as in contemporary and succeeding poetical fame, Petrarch was and is only second to Dante. He differed greatly from him, however, in several capital qualities. The temper of Dante was pre-eminently democratic; and the spirit of all his writings aimed at instructing and elevating the people, and in particular at building up the vulgar tongue. Petrarch was a literary aristocrat, and despised the vulgar tongue; but his labors in behalf of the Latin classics—in which he was no doubt even more deeply learned than his great predecessor—were unparalleled and invaluable; and so great, indeed, was the encouragement which he gave to the studies in Latin, that he may fairly be regarded as the father of the revival of the vulgar literature, and of the classic art which became transfused into it.

Judged by the cold blood of later times, Petrarch was an over-enthusiastic admirer of ancient Rome and her glories. It was an exaggerated picture, perhaps (if that were possible), which he drew of her grandeur in his 'Africa,' written in Latin hexameters, where he paints with superb eloquence Scipio, Lælius, Masinissa, Ennius, and other great characters; ornamenting his poem with splendid descriptions and artificial orations. But by it he won his laureateship; and it was through the possession of this «exaggerated» zeal that he became the admirer and friend of Cola di Rienzo, and was inspired to write that immortal canzone which still kindles every true Italian heart, 'Spirto Gentil,' given at the end of this article in Major Macgregor's very good translation. That this sentiment was founded in loyal patriotism, as he understood it, would be sufficiently evinced, if we had nothing more, by the celebrated canzone 'Italia Mia,' which is here given in the almost perfect translation of Lady Dacre. Surely never has patriotic affection been clothed in warmer or more exquisite numbers.

Without deciding whether it was a cause or a consequence of his «exaggerated» love and admiration of Roman antiquity, it is a fact that in familiarity with, and in abundance and elegance of writing in, the Latin tongue, he has not even been approached by any other modern. He left a very great number of works in Latin, both prose and verse, upon a very great variety of subjects, religious, political, philosophical; for the most part of no inherent interest to-day, and far too numerous to be even named here. Some of the more famous and curious will show their drift by their titles: 'De Remediis Utriusque Fortunæ' (Concerning the Remedies for Either Fortune), developing the doctrine of the Stoics, that «Not the good things of life are truly good, nor the ills truly bad, but that the good consists in subduing the passions»; 'De Vita Solitaria' (On Solitude); 'De Ocio Religiosorum' (On the Soul-Rest of the Religious), written after his visit to his brother, who was a monk; 'Secretum' (Private), a confession to St. Augustine in the presence of personified Truth,—an important work for understanding the mind of Petrarch, and the true nature of his love for the lady Laura. There are many volumes of letters in Latin, sometimes in prose, sometimes in verse, often really a short treatise or oration: the 'Familiari' (To a Friend); 'Senili' (To an Old Man), one of which is really a Latin translation of the story of Griselda in the 'Decameron'; 'Variæ' (Miscellanies); one, 'Ad Posteros' (To Posterity), brings his autobiography up to the year 1351. He says he had burned more than he preserved.

Petrarch differed from Dante in another aspect, which is twofold. Dante is often rough and sometimes imperfect in his numbers; but his invention is Homeric, and never sleeps. Petrarch's invention is often dull; but the utmost refinement and perfection of poetic style, and the extreme finish of every line, are never absent.

Still another distinction between them, though each was marvelous in his own way, is that Dante is a universal poet, embracing in his matter the whole sphere of theology, science, and politics, as well as all places from the centre of the earth to the zenith of the highest heaven, and all times from the creation of the world to the final Judgment Day; whereas the only matter of Petrarch in his Italian poetry is the passion of human love, and this all centred about one beautiful woman. The ‹Canzoniere,› on which his immortal fame depends, consist of more than three hundred sonnets, canzoni, sestine, dancing-songs, and pastorals, and with a half-dozen exceptions, chiefly patriotic. There is not one in which his love for Laura is not wrought in, either as foundation or ornament.

This might well enough be expected to produce an intolerable monotony; and theoretically, the more familiar one should become with them the more sensibly the monotony would be felt. Except in the work of an extraordinary genius, equipped with superlative art, this must undoubtedly hold good. But in fact, in the case of Petrarch the opposite is true. The character of monotony is not really there; and the more often one reads the «Rhymes,» the less of monotony is felt, and the more particular and individual each sonnet and canzone is perceived to be. Of this curious paradox the poet Campbell has given a very ingenious and pretty explanation, as follows:—

> «This monotony,» he says, «impresses the reader exactly in proportion to the slenderness of his acquaintance with the poet. Approaching the sonnets for the first time, they may probably appear to him as like to each other as the sheep of a flock; but when he has become familiar with them, he will perceive an interesting individuality in every sonnet, and will discriminate their individual character as precisely as the shepherd can distinguish every single sheep of his flock by its voice and its face.»

Yet again, Dante wrote his great poem in all the panoply of the poetic art, precisely anticipating immortality for himself and his work, with posterity distinctly in his view,—as he tells us over and over again in the ‹Vita Nuova›: while Petrarch calls his Italian poems ‹Nugæ› (Trifles), which he threw off, in the fugitive transports of his soul, for the eye of one dear lady, according to the varying moods of passion and the changing circumstances of life; of necessity leaving, under all their glittering poetic armor, here and there a vulnerable spot, through which the critics could shoot their querulous shafts, and have often done so. Among these the poet Campbell—whom we have just quoted, and who is as querulous as any—closes his criticisms on what he calls Petrarch's «affected refinements» and «unnatural conceits» with refreshing frankness, saying: «If I could make out the strongest critical case against him, I should still have to answer this question,—How comes it that Petrarch's poetry, in spite of all these faults, has been the favorite of the world for five hundred years? So strong a regard for Petrarch is rooted in the mind of Italy, that his renown has grown up like an oak which has reached maturity amidst the storms of ages, and fears not decay from revolving centuries.»

This answer is very true. But the question returns, «From what extraordinary particulars has arisen this overtopping regard for Petrarch's poetry in the mind of Italy?» We confidently answer, first, from the «melting melody» of his verse; in which, taking into account the quantity he has left, he easily surpasses all others who have used that harmonious speech. Secondly, that he has treated the tenderest sentiment of universal humanity not only far more copiously, in the mere number of touching lines, than any other Italian poet, but with a marvelous absence of repetition he goes ever on and on with his delicious numbers, drawing ever new similitudes and pictures, which are continually bringing silent thoughts of sweetness to the reader's mind. Finally, there is in his handiwork a tone all his own, an unwonted and peculiar way of expressing the sentiment of love; not sensual, not conventional, not over-metaphysical, but natural and truly human: in still other words, while clothed with a purity fit for the most virtuous and modest lady's ear, his lines, radiant with beauty and of bewitching melody, yet breathe a tenderness, a sincerity, a manliness, not surpassed by Tibullus, or any of the most objectionable of the famous old classic pagans.

It is this quality, so bewitching in the original, of Petrarch's Italian poetry,—subtle and evanescent as the fragrance of a rose,—in which perhaps lies the greatest difference of all between the two supreme poets of Italy, and renders the stanzas of Petrarch the despair of every translator into a foreign tongue. Not only are the unparalleled melodies of his delicious numbers impossible to be carried over into other measures and other sounds, but the sweet images, ethereal as the fleecy clouds of June, are shy of another zone.

No English poet has attempted a complete translation of Petrarch's Italian poetry. Such translations as exist are fragmentary, by different hands, and of very unequal merit. We have selected the most celebrated morsels, and in the translations which seemed to bring to us the most successfully that which Petrarch has given to those who are native to the language and the scenery of Italy.

J. F. Bingham

«ITALIA MIA, BENCHÈ 'L PARLAR SIA INDARNO»

To the Princes of Italy, Exhorting Them to Set Her Free

O my own Italy! though words are vain
The mortal wounds to close,
Unnumbered, that thy beauteous bosom stain,
Yet may it soothe my pain
To sigh forth Tiber's woes,
And Arno's wrongs, as on Po's saddened shore
Sorrowing I wander, and my numbers pour.
Ruler of heaven! By the all-pitying love
That could thy Godhead move
To dwell a lowly sojourner on earth,
Turn, Lord! on this thy chosen land thine eye:
See, God of Charity!
From what light cause this cruel war has birth;
And the hard hearts by savage discord steeled,
Thou, Father! from on high,
Touch by my humble voice, that stubborn wrath may yield!

Ye, to whose sovereign hands the fates confide
Of this fair land the reins,—
(This land for which no pity wrings your breast,)—
Why does the stranger's sword her plains invest?
That her green fields be dyed,
Hope ye, with blood from the Barbarians' veins?
Beguiled by error weak,
Ye see not, though to pierce so deep ye boast,
Who love or faith in venal bosoms seek:
When thronged your standards most,
Ye are encompassed most by hostile bands.
Oh, hideous deluge gathered in strange lands,
That rushing down amain
O'erwhelms our every native lovely plain!
Alas! if our own hands
Have thus our weal betrayed, who shall our cause sustain?

Well did kind Nature, guardian of our State,
Rear her rude Alpine heights,
A lofty rampart against German hate:
But blind ambition, seeking his own ill,
With ever restless will,
To the pure gales contagion foul invites;
Within the same strait fold

The gentle flocks and wolves relentless throng,
Where still meek innocence must suffer wrong:
And these — oh, shame avowed! —
Are of the lawless hordes no tie can hold;
Fame tells how Marius's sword
Erewhile their bosoms gored, —
Nor has Time's hand aught blurred the record proud!
When they who, thirsting, stooped to quaff the flood,
With the cool waters mixed, drank of a comrade's blood!

Great Cæsar's name I pass, who o'er our plains
Poured forth the ensanguined tide,
Drawn by our own good swords from out their veins;
But now — nor know I what ill stars preside —
Heaven holds this land in hate!
To you the thanks, whose hands control her helm!
You, whose rash feuds despoil
Of all the beauteous earth the fairest realm!
Are ye impelled by judgment, crime, or fate,
To oppress the desolate?
From broken fortunes and from humble toil
The hard-earned dole to wring,
While from afar ye bring
Dealers in blood, bartering their souls for hire?
In truth's great cause I sing,
Nor hatred nor disdain my earnest lay inspire.

Nor mark ye yet, confirmed by proof on proof,
Bavaria's perfidy,
Who strikes in mockery, keeping death aloof?
(Shame, worse than aught of loss, in honor's eye!)
While ye, with honest rage, devoted pour
Your inmost bosom's gore! —
Yet give one hour to thought,
And ye shall own how little he can hold
Another's glory dear, who sets his own at naught.
O Latin blood of old!
Arise, and wrest from obloquy thy fame,
Nor bow before a name
Of hollow sound, whose power no laws enforce!
For if barbarians rude
Have higher minds subdued,
Ours! ours the crime! — Not such wise Nature's course.

Ah! is not this the soil my foot first pressed?
And here, in cradled rest,

Was I not softly hushed? here fondly reared?
Ah! is not this my country? so endeared
By every filial tie!
In whose lap shrouded both my parents lie!
Oh! by this tender thought,
Your torpid bosoms to compassion wrought,
Look on the people's grief!
Who, after God, of you expect relief;
And if ye but relent,
Virtue shall rouse her in embattled might,
Against blind fury bent,
Nor long shall doubtful hang the unequal fight;
For no—the ancient flame
Is not extinguished yet, that raised the Italian name!

Mark, sovereign lords! how Time, with pinion strong,
Swift hurries life along!
E'en now, behold! Death presses on the rear.
We sojourn here a day—the next, are gone!
The soul disrobed, alone,
Must shuddering seek the doubtful pass we fear.
Oh! at the dreaded bourne,
Abase the lofty brow of wrath and scorn,—
Storms adverse to the eternal calm on high!
And yet, whose cruelty
Has sought another's harm, by fairer deed
Of heart, or hand, or intellect, aspire
To win the honest meed
Of just renown—the noble mind's desire!
Thus sweet on earth the stay!
Thus to the spirit pure, unbarred is Heaven's way!

My song! with courtesy, and numbers sooth,
Thy daring reasons grace;
For thou the mighty, in their pride of place,
Must woo to gentle ruth,
Whose haughty will long evil customs nurse,
Ever to truth averse!
Thee better fortunes wait,
Among the virtues few, the truly great!
Tell them—but who shall bid my terrors cease?
Peace! Peace! on thee I call! Return, O heaven-born Peace!

Translation of Lady Dacre.

«SPIRTO GENTIL CHE QUELLE MEMBRA REGGI»

To Rienzi, Beseeching Him to Restore to Rome Her Ancient Liberty

Spirit heroic! who with fire divine
Kindlest those limbs, awhile which pilgrim hold
On earth a chieftain gracious, wise, and bold;
Since rightly now the rod of State is thine,
Rome and her wandering children to confine,
And yet reclaim her to the old good way;
To thee I speak, for elsewhere not a ray
Of virtue can I find, extinct below,
Nor one who feels of evil deeds the shame.
Why Italy still waits, and what her aim,
I know not: callous to her proper woe,
Indolent, aged, slow,
Still will she sleep? Is none to rouse her found?
Oh that my wakening hands were through her tresses wound!

So grievous is the spell, the trance so deep,
Loud though we call, my hope is faint that e'er
She yet will waken from her heavy sleep;
But not, methinks, without some better end
Was this our Rome intrusted to thy care,
Who surest may revive and best defend.
Fearlessly then upon that reverend head,
'Mid her disheveled locks, thy fingers spread,
And lift at length the sluggard from the dust;
I, day and night, who her prostration mourn,
For this in thee have fixed my certain trust,—
That if her sons yet turn,
And their eyes ever true to honor raise,
The glory is reserved for thy illustrious days!

Her ancient walls, which still with fear and love
The world admires, whene'er it calls to mind
The days of eld, and turns to look behind;
Her hoar and caverned monuments above
The dust of men, whose fame, until the world
In dissolution sink, can never fail;
Her all, that in one ruin now lies hurled,
Hopes to have healed by thee its every ail.

O faithful Brutus, noble Scipios, dead!
To you what triumph, where ye now are blest,
If of our worthy choice the fame have spread:
And how his laureled crest
Will old Fabricius rear, with joy elate,
That his own Rome again shall beauteous be and great!

And if for things of earth its care Heaven show,
The souls who dwell above in joy and peace,
And their mere mortal frames have left below,
Implore thee this long civil strife may cease,
Which kills all confidence, nips every good,
Which bars the way to many a roof where men
Once holy, hospitable lived, the den
Of fearless rapine now and frequent blood,
Whose doors to virtue only are denied.
While beneath plundered saints, in outraged fanes
Plots faction, and revenge the altar stains;
And — contrast sad and wide —
The very bells which sweetly wont to fling
Summons to prayer and praise, now battle's tocsin ring!

Pale weeping women, and a friendless crowd
Of tender years, infirm and desolate Age,
Which hates itself and its superfluous days,
With each blest order to religion vowed,
Whom works of love through lives of want engage.
To thee for help their hands and voices raise;
While our poor panic-stricken land displays
The thousand wounds which now so mar her frame
That e'en from foes compassion they command;
Or more if Christendom thy care may claim,
Lo! God's own house on fire, while not a hand
Moves to subdue the flame:
Heal thou these wounds, this feverish tumult end,
And on the holy work Heaven's blessing shall descend!

Often against our marble column high,
Wolf, Lion, Bear, proud Eagle, and base Snake
Even to their own injury insult shower;
Lifts against thee and theirs her mournful cry
The noble Dame who calls thee here to break
Away the evil weeds which will not flower.
A thousand years and more! and gallant men
There fixed her seat in beauty and in power;

The breed of patriot hearts has failed since then!
And in their stead, upstart and haughty now,
A race which ne'er to her in reverence bends,
Her husband, father thou!
Like care from thee and counsel she attends,
As o'er his other works the Sire of all extends.

'Tis seldom e'en that with our fairest schemes
Some adverse fortune will not mix, and mar
With instant ill, ambition's noblest dreams;
But thou, once ta'en thy path, so walk that I
May pardon her past faults, great as they are,
If now at least she give herself the lie.
For never in all memory as to thee,
To mortal man so sure and straight the way
Of everlasting honor open lay,
For thine the power and will, if right I see,
To lift our empire to its old proud state.
Let this thy glory be!
They succored her when young and strong and great;
He, in her weak old age, warded the stroke of Fate.

Forth on thy way! my song, and where the bold
Tarpeian lifts his brow, shouldst thou behold,
Of others' weal more thoughtful than his own,
The chief, by general Italy revered,
Tell him from me, to whom he is but known
As one to virtue and by fame endeared,
Till stamped upon his heart the sad truth be,
That day by day to thee,
With suppliant attitude and streaming eyes,
For justice and relief our seven-hilled city cries.

Translation of Major Macgregor.

«VERGINE BELLA CHE DI SOL VESTITA»

To the Virgin Mary

Beautiful Virgin! clothèd with the sun,
Crowned with the stars, who so the eternal sun
Well pleasèdst that in thine his light he hid;
Love pricks me on to utter speech of thee,
And—feeble to commence without thy aid—
Of Him who on thy bosom rests in love.
Her I invoke who gracious still replies

To all who ask in faith:
Virgin! if ever yet
The misery of man and mortal things
To mercy moved thee, to my prayer incline;
Help me in this my strife,
Though I am but of dust, and thou heaven's radiant Queen!

Wise Virgin! of that lovely number one,—
Of virgins blest and wise
Even the first, and with the brightest lamp:
O solid buckler of afflicted hearts!
'Neath which against the blows of fate and death,
Not mere deliverance but great victory is;
Relief from the blind ardor which consumes
Vain mortals here below!
Virgin! those lustrous eyes,
Which tearfully beheld the cruel prints
In the fair limbs of thy beloved Son,
Ah! turn on my sad doubt,
Who friendless, helpless thus, for counsel come to thee!

O Virgin! pure and perfect in each part,
Maiden or Mother, from thy honored birth,
This life to lighten and the next adorn;
O bright and lofty gate of opened heaven!
By thee, thy Son, and His the Almighty Sire,
In our worst need to save us came below:
And from amid all other earthly seats,
Thou only wert elect,
Virgin supremely blest!
The tears of Eve who turnedst into joy;
Make me, thou canst, yet worthy of his grace,
Oh, happy without end,
Who art in highest heaven a saint immortal shrined!

O holy Virgin! full of every good,
Who, in humility most deep and true,
To heaven art mounted, thence my prayers to hear,
That fountain thou of pity didst produce,
That sun of justice, light, which calms and clears
Our age, else clogged with errors dark and foul.
Three sweet and precious names in thee combine,
Of mother, daughter, wife,
Virgin! with glory crowned,
Queen of that King who has unloosed our bonds,

And free and happy made the world again,
By whose most sacred wounds
I pray my heart to fix where true joys only are!

Virgin! of all unparalleled, alone,
Who with thy beauties hast enamored heaven,
Whose like has never been, nor e'er shall be;
For holy thoughts with chaste and pious acts
To the true God a sacred living shrine
In thy fecund virginity have made.
By thee, dear Mary, yet my life may be
Happy, if to thy prayers,
O Virgin meek and mild!
Where sin abounded grace shall more abound!
With bended knee and broken heart I pray
That thou my guide wouldst be,
And to such prosperous end direct my faltering way.

Bright Virgin! and immutable as bright,
O'er life's tempestuous ocean the sure star
Each trusting mariner that truly guides,—
Look down, and see amid this dreadful storm
How I am tost at random and alone,
And how already my last shriek is near;
Yet still in thee, sinful although and vile
My soul keeps all her trust:
Virgin! I thee implore,
Let not thy foe have triumph in my fall;
Remember that our sin made God himself,
To free us from its chain,
Within thy virgin womb our image on him take!

Virgin! what tears already have I shed,
Cherished what dreams and breathed what prayers in [vain,
But for my own worse penance and sure loss:
Since first on Arno's shore I saw the light
Till now, whate'er I sought, wherever turned,
My life has passed in torment and in tears;
For mortal loveliness in air, act, speech,
Has seized and soiled my soul:
O Virgin! pure and good,
Delay not till I reach my life's last year;
Swifter than shaft and shuttle are, my days
'Mid misery and sin
Have vanished all, and now death only is behind!

Virgin! She now is dust who living held
My heart in grief, and plunged it since in gloom;
She knew not of my many ills this one,—
And had she known, what since befell me still
Had been the same, for every other wish
Was death to me and ill renown for her;
But, Queen of heaven, our Goddess,—if to thee
Such homage be not sin,—
Virgin! of matchless mind,
Thou knowest now the whole; and that which else
No other can, is naught to thy great power:
Deign then my grief to end,—
Thus honor shall be thine, and safe my peace at last!

Virgin! in whom I fix my every hope,
Who canst and willst assist me in great need,
Forsake me not in this my worst extreme:
Regard not me, but Him who made me thus;
Let his high image stamped on my poor worth
Towards one so low and lost thy pity move.
Medusa spells have made me as a rock
Distilling a vain flood:
Virgin! my harassed heart
With pure and pious tears do thou fulfill,
That its last sigh at least may be devout,
And free from earthly taint
As was my earliest vow ere madness filled my veins!

Virgin! benevolent, and foe of pride,
Ah! let the love of our one Author win
Some mercy for a contrite humble heart;
For if her poor frail mortal dust I loved
With loyalty so wonderful and long,
Much more my faith and gratitude for thee.
From this my present sad and sunken state
If by thy help I rise,
Virgin! to thy dear name
I consecrate and cleanse my thoughts, speech, pen,
My mind, and heart with all its tears and sighs;
Point then that better path,
And with complacence view my changed desires at last.

The day must come, nor distant far its date,
Time flies so swift and sure,
Oh, peerless and alone!

When death my heart, now conscience-struck, shall seize;
Commend me, Virgin! then to thy dear Son,
True God and Very Man,
That my last sigh in peace may in his arms be breathed!

Translation of Major Macgregor.

«CHIARE, FRESCHE E DOLCI ACQUE»

TO THE FOUNTAIN OF VAUCLUSE—CONTEMPLATIONS OF DEATH

Ye limpid brooks, by whose clear streams
My goddess laid her tender limbs!
Ye gentle boughs, whose friendly shade
Gave shelter to the lovely maid!
Ye herbs and flowers, so sweetly pressed
By her soft rising snowy breast!
Ye zephyrs mild, that breathed around
The place where Love my heart did wound!
Now at my summons all appear,
And to my dying words give ear.

If then my destiny requires,
And Heaven with my fate conspires,
That Love these eyes should weeping close,
Here let me find a soft repose.
So death will less my soul affright,
And free from dread, my weary sprite
Naked alone will dare t' essay
The still unknown, though beaten way;
Pleased that her mortal part will have
So safe a port, so sweet a grave.

The cruel fair, for whom I burn,
May one day to these shades return,
And smiling with superior grace,
Her lover seek around this place;
And when instead of me she finds
Some crumbling dust tossed by the winds,
She may feel pity in her breast,
And sighing, wish me happy rest,
Drying her eyes with her soft veil:
Such tears must sure with Heaven prevail.

Well I remember how the flowers
Descended from these boughs in showers,

Encircled in the fragrant cloud
She sat, nor 'midst such glory proud.
These blossoms to her lap repair,
These fall upon her flowing hair,
(Like pearls enchased in gold they seem,)
These on the ground, these on the stream;
In giddy rounds these dancing say,
« Here Love and Laura only sway.»

In rapturous wonder oft I said,
Sure she in Paradise was made;
Thence sprang that bright angelic state,
Those looks, those words, that heavenly gait,
That beauteous smile, that voice divine,
Those graces that around her shine.
Transported I beheld the fair,
And sighing cried, How came I here?
In heaven, amongst th' immortal blest,
Here let me fix and ever rest.

Translation of R. Molesworth.

«ERANO I CAPEI D' ORO ALL' AURA SPARSI»

He Paints the Beauties of Laura, Protesting His Unalterable Love

Loose to the breeze her golden tresses flowed,
Wildly in thousand mazy ringlets blown,
And from her eyes unconquered glances shone,
Those glances now so sparingly bestowed.
And true or false, meseemed some signs she showed
As o'er her cheek soft pity's hue was thrown;
I, whose whole breast with love's soft food was sown,
What wonder if at once my bosom glowed?
Graceful she moved, with more than mortal mien,
In form an angel; and her accents won
Upon the ear with more than human sound.
A spirit heavenly pure, a living sun,
Was what I saw; and if no more 'twere seen,
T' unbend the bow will never heal the wound.

Translation Anonymous: Oxford, 1795.

«IN QUAL PARTE DEL CIELO, IN QUALE IDEA»

HE EXTOLS THE BEAUTY AND VIRTUE OF LAURA

SAY from what part of heaven 'twas Nature drew,
From what idea, that so perfect mold
To form such features, bidding us behold,
In charms below, what she above could do?
What fountain nymph, what dryad maid e'er threw
Upon the wind such tresses of pure gold?
What heart such numerous virtues can unfold?
Although the chiefest all my fond hopes slew.
He for celestial charms may look in vain
Who has not seen my fair one's radiant eyes,
And felt their glances pleasingly beguile.
How Love can heal his wounds, then wound again,
He only knows who knows how sweet her sighs,
How sweet her converse, and how sweet her smile.

Translation of Rev. Dr. Nott.

THE DEATH-BED OF LAURA

NO POWER of darkness, with ill influence, dared
Within a space so holy to intrude,
Till Death his terrible triumph had declared.
Then hushed was all lament, all fear subdued;
Each on those beauteous features gazed intent,
And from despair was armed with fortitude.
As a pure flame that not by force is spent,
But faint and fainter softly dies away
Passed gently forth in peace the soul, content;
And as a light of clear and steady ray,
When fails the source from which its brightness flows,
She to the last held on her wonted way.
Pale, was she? no; but white as shrouding snows,
That, when the winds are lulled, fall silently,
She seemed as one o'erwearied to repose.
E'en as in balmy slumbers lapt to lie
(The spirit parted from the form below),
In her appeared what th' unwise term to die;
And Death sate beauteous on her beauteous brow.

Translation of Lady Dacre.

«OIMÉ IL BEL VISO! OIMÉ IL SOAVE AGUARDO!»

On the Announcement of the Death of Laura

Alas! that touching glance, that beauteous face!
Alas! that dignity with sweetness fraught!
Alas! that speech which tamed the wildest thought!
That roused the coward, glory to embrace;
Alas! that smile which in me did encase
The fatal dart, whence here I hope for naught.
Oh! hadst thou earlier our regions sought,
The world had then confessed thy sovereign grace!
In thee I breathed; life's flame was nursed by thee,
For I was thine; and since of thee bereaved,
Each other woe hath lost its venomed sting:
My soul's blest joy! when last thy voice on me
In music fell, my heart sweet hope conceived;
Alas! thy words have sped on zephyrs' wing!

Translation of Miss Wollaston.

«SE LAMENTAR AUGELLI, O VERDI FRONDE»

She is Ever Present to Him

If the the lorn bird complain, or rustling weep
Soft summer airs o'er foliage waving slow,
Or the hoarse brook come murmuring down the steep,
Where on the enameled bank I sit below,
With thoughts of love that bid my numbers flow,—
'Tis then I see her, though in earth she sleep!
Her, formed in heaven! I see, and hear, and know!
Responsive sighing, weeping as I weep:
«Alas!» she pitying says, «ere yet the hour,
Why hurry life away with swifter flight?
Why from thy eyes this flood of sorrow pour?
No longer mourn my fate! through death my days
Become eternal! to eternal light
These eyes, which seemed in darkness closed, I raise!»

Translation of Lady Dacre.

«ALMA FELICE, CHE SOVENTE TORNI»

HE THANKS HER THAT FROM TIME TO TIME SHE RETURNS TO CONSOLE HIM WITH HER PRESENCE

When welcome slumber locks my torpid frame,
I see thy spirit in the midnight dream;
Thine eyes that still in living lustre beam:
In all but frail mortality the same.
Ah! then, from earth and all its sorrows free,
Methinks I meet thee in each former scene,
Once the sweet shelter of a heart serene;
Now vocal only while I weep for thee.
For thee!—ah, no! From human ills secure,
Thy hallowed soul exults in endless day,
'Tis I who linger on the toilsome way.
No balm relieves the anguish I endure,
Save the fond feeble hope that thou art near
To soothe my sufferings with an angel's tear.

Translation of Anne Bannerman.

«I' HO PIEN DI SOSPIR QUEST' AER TUTTO»

VAUCLUSE HAS BECOME TO HIM A SCENE OF PAIN

To every sound, save sighs, this air is mute,
When from rude rocks I view the smiling land
Where she was born, who held my life in hand
From its first bud till blossoms turned to fruit.
To heaven she's gone, and I left destitute
To mourn her loss, and cast around in pain
These wearied eyes, which, seeking her in vain
Where'er they turn, o'erflow with grief acute;
There's not a root or stone amongst these hills,
Nor branch nor verdant leaf 'midst these soft glades,
Nor in the valley flowery herbage grows,
Nor liquid drop the sparkling fount distils,
Nor savage beast that shelters in these shades,
But knows how sharp my grief—how deep my woes.

Translation of Mrs. Wrottesley.

«PASSATO È 'L TEMPO OMAI, LASSO! CHE TANTO»

His Only Desire is Again to Be with Her

Ah! gone for ever are the happy years
That soothed my soul amid love's fiercest fire,
And she for whom I wept and tuned my lyre
Has gone, alas!—but left my lyre, my tears:
Gone is the face, whose holy look endears;
But in my heart, ere yet it did retire,
Left the sweet radiance of its eyes entire;
My heart? Ah, no! not mine! for to the spheres
Of light she bore it captive, soaring high,
In angel robe triumphant, and now stands
Crowned with the laurel wreath of chastity:
Oh, could I throw aside these earthly bands
That tie me down where wretched mortals sigh,
To join blest spirits in celestial lands!

Translation of Dr. Morehead.

«SENTO L' AURA MIA ANTICA, E I DOLCI COLLI»

He Revisits Vaucluse

Once more, ye balmy gales, I feel you blow;
Again, sweet hills, I mark the morning beams
Gild your green summits; while your silver streams
Through vales of fragrance undulating flow.
But you, ye dreams of bliss, no longer here
Give life and beauty to the glowing scene;
For stern remembrance stands where you have been,
And blasts the verdure of the blooming year.
O Laura! Laura! in the dust with thee,
Would I could find a refuge from despair!
Is this thy boasted triumph, Love, to tear
A heart thy coward malice dares not free;
And bid it live, while every hope is fled,
To weep among the ashes of the dead?

Translation of Anne Bannerman.

«E' MI PAR D'OR IN ORA UDIRE IL MESSO»

He Feels that the Day of their Reunion is at Hand

Methinks from hour to hour her voice I hear;
My Lady calls me! I would fain obey:
Within, without, I feel myself decay;
And am so altered — not with many a year —
That to myself a stranger I appear;
All my old usual life is put away.
Could I but know how long I have to stay!
Grant, Heaven, the long-wished summons may be near!
Oh, blest the day when from this earthly jail
I shall be freed; when burst and broken lies
This mortal guise, so heavy yet so frail;
When from this black night my saved spirit flies,
Soaring up, up, above the bright serene,
Where with my Lord my Lady shall be seen.

Translation of Major Macgregor.

«SOLO E PENSOSO I PIÙ DESERTI CAMPI»

He Seeks Solitude, but Love Follows him Everywhere

Alone, and lost in thought, the desert glade
Measuring, I roam with ling'ring steps and slow;
And still a watchful glance around me throw,
Anxious to shun the print of human tread:
No other means I find, no surer aid
From the world's prying eye to hide my woe:
So well my wild disordered gestures show,
And love-lorn looks, the fire within me bred,
That well I deem each mountain, wood, and plain,
And river, knows what I from man conceal,—
What dreary hues my life's fond prospects dim.
Yet whate'er wild or savage paths I've ta'en,
Where'er I wander, Love attends me still,
Soft whisp'ring to my soul, and I to him.

Translation Anonymous: Oxford, 1795.

PADRE DEL CIEL, DOPO I PERDUTI GIORNI»

Conscious of his Folly, he Prays God to Turn Him to a Better Life

Father of heaven! after days misspent,
After the nights of wild tumultuous thought,
In that fierce passion's strong entanglement,
One, for my peace too lovely fair, had wrought:
Vouchsafe that by thy grace, my spirit, bent
On nobler aims, to holier ways be brought;
That so my Foe, spreading with dark intent
His mortal snares, be foiled, and held at naught.
E'en now th' eleventh year its course fulfills,
That I have bowed me to the tyranny
Relentless most to fealty most tried.
Have mercy, Lord! on my unworthy ills;
Fix all my thoughts in contemplation high,—
How on the cross this day a Savior died.

Translation of Lady Dacre.

«CHI VUOL VEDER QUANTUNQUE PUÒ NATURA»

Whoever Beholds Her must Admit that his Praises cannot Reach her Perfection

Who wishes to behold the utmost might
Of heaven and nature, on her let him gaze,—
Sole sun, not only in my partial lays,
But to the dark world, blind to virtue's light!
And let him haste to view: for death in spite
The guilty leaves, and on the virtuous preys;
For this loved angel heaven impatient stays;
And mortal charms are transient as they're bright!
Here shall he see, if timely he arrive,
Virtue and beauty, royalty of mind,
In one blest union joined. Then shall he say
That vainly my weak rhymes to praise her strive,
Whose dazzling beams have struck my genius blind;
He must forever weep if he delay!

Translation of Lord Charlemont.

«NÈ MAI PIETOSA MADRE AL CARO FIGLIO»

HER COUNSEL ALONE AFFORDS HIM RELIEF

NE'ER to the son in whom her age is blest,
The anxious mother,—nor to her loved lord
The wedded dame, impending ill to ward,—
With careful sighs so faithful counsel pressed,
As she who, from her high eternal rest,
Bending as though my exile she deplored,
With all her wonted tenderness restored,
And softer pity on her brow impressed!
Now with a mother's fears, and now as one
Who loves with chaste affection, in her speech
She points what to pursue and what to shun!
Our years retracing of long, various grief,
Wooing my soul at higher good to reach,
And while she speaks, my bosom finds relief!

Translation of Lady Dacre.

«QUI REPOSAN QUEI CASTE E FELICI OSSA»

SONNET FOUND IN LAURA'S TOMB

HERE now repose those chaste, those blest remains
Of that most gentle spirit, sole in earth!
Harsh monumental stone, that here confinest
True honor, fame, and beauty, all o'erthrown!
Death has destroyed that Laurel green, and torn
Its tender roots; and all the noble meed
Of my long warfare, passing (if aright
My melancholy reckoning holds) four lustres.
O happy plant! Avignon's favored soil
Has seen thee spring and die;—and here with thee
Thy poet's pen, and Muse, and genius lie.
O lovely beauteous limbs! O vivid fire,
That even in death hast power to melt the soul!
Heaven be thy portion, peace with God on high!

Translation of Lord Woodhouselee.

PETRONIUS ARBITER

(First Century A. D.: died 66)

BY HARRIET WATERS PRESTON

In the solemn last book of the fragmentary Annals of Tacitus, where the historian is enumerating the distinguished victims of Nero's tyranny, he pauses for a moment before one gallant figure, of which the smiling, dauntless, almost insolent grace appears to discountenance and half confute the sombre vehemence of his own righteous wrath.

Petronius Arbiter

«But about Gaius Petronius,» he says, «a word more is necessary. It had been the habit of this man to sleep in the daytime, reserving the night hours both for the duties and the delights of life. Others win fame by industry; he won his by indolence. Yet it was not as a roysterer, or a debauchee, that he was renowned, like the common herd of spendthrifts, but for being profoundly versed in the art of luxury. Free of speech, prompt in action, and ostentatiously careless of consequences, he nevertheless charmed by a complete absence of affectation. Yet when he was proconsul in Bithynia, and afterward as consul, he showed great vigor and ability in affairs. Returning then to his vices,—or to his affectation of vice,—he was received into the small circle of Nero's intimates as ‹arbiter,› or final authority in matters of taste. Nothing was considered truly elegant and refined until Petronius had given it his sanction. All this excited the jealousy of Tigellinus, who scented a rival, and one more accomplished than himself in the proper lore of the voluptuary. He therefore began appealing to the emperor's cruelty, which was stronger in him than any other sentiment; accused Petronius of complicity with Scævinus, had him indicted, seized and imprisoned the greater part of his household, suborned a slave to testify against him, bought off the defense. Meanwhile Cæsar had gone into Campania; but Petronius, who was to have followed him, was arrested at Cumæ, and preferred himself to put an end to all uncertainty. Yet he showed no unseemly hurry even about taking his own life. When his veins had been once opened, he ordered them bound up again for a little and talked with his friends cheerfully and lightly,—not in the least as though wishing to impress them by his fortitude. Verses were improvised, and merry songs were sung. He was ready to listen to anything and everything except philosophical maxims and discourse on the immortality of the soul. To some of his slaves he gave largess, and to some he gave lashes. Finally he lay down upon a couch, and composed himself to sleep, as though preferring that his compulsory end should appear an accidental one. He had not, however, like many of the victims of that period, devoted his last will and testament to the adulation of Nero and Tigellinus. On the contrary, he drew up an arraignment of the Emperor, detailing all his adulteries and ingenious atrocities, and giving the names of those whom he had destroyed,—both men and women; which document he sealed and dispatched to Nero. He then broke his seal-ring, that it might bring no one else into trouble.»

Except for what remains of his own writing, and for casual and unimportant allusions by the elder Pliny, Macrobius, and one or two other ancient writers, this is literally all we know of Nero's *arbiter elegantiæ;* but seldom have a character and a career been condensed into fewer and more telling words. The whole man is there,—as truly as in the highly elaborated recent portrait by Henryk Sienkiewicz, in ‹Quo Vadis.› We see and know him in all his native amiability and perfect breeding, his keen insight, quiet daring, and immense reserve of power; his irresistible gayety and careless fascination. But even without the help of the stern yet candid analysis of Tacitus, we almost think we could have divined the same interesting personality from the disjointed fragments of Petronius's own book. Even where the matter of the story it tells is coarsest, the narrator's accent is so refined, his touch so light,—above all, his humor is at once so droll and so delightfully indulgent and humane,—that we cannot help separating the man from his work. We feel as if he had the magic art of keeping his own fine toga to some extent unsmirched by the filth amid which he treads; and as if it were quite deliberately, and with a motive not base, and even less unkindly, that he holds his artistic silver mirror up to the festering waste of common Roman nature.

The ‹Satiricon,› or ‹Satirorum Liber Petronii Arbitri,› contained originally—or was apparently to have contained—some twenty books, of which we only possess parts of the fifteenth and sixteenth, and a few more disconnected passages. The species of satire was that known as Menippean, or prose interspersed with bits of verse. In the language of our day, the works would be called a novel of manners and adventure. And what manners! what adventures! Over and over again we turn away in disgust, but the irresistible accents of the narrator win us back. «Come, come,» he seems to say, «nothing human is alien! Squeamishness—pardon me!—is often a mere lack of nerve! These curious, wallowing folk are, after all, our next of kin. Do not let us commit the unpardonable vulgarity of being ashamed of our relations! And then—they are so deliciously droll!» So he pursues his theme with all the *verve* of Dumas père, and all but the unerring discernment and dramatic power of Shakespeare.

The freedman Eucolpius is relating his adventures, and those of his friend Ascyltos, by sea and land. They appear, when we abruptly make their acquaintance, already to have traveled far and seen much. In the fifth century we come upon traces of them at Marseilles, in the writings of a no less worthy author than Sidonius Apollinaris,—but just where we pick them up they are living by their abundant wits among the semi-Greek cities of southern Italy; chiefly perhaps at Cumæ. The best and most complete episode they have to offer us is that of a stupendous feast, given by an enormously rich and ignorant parvenu named Trimalchio. The invitations have been so general that our two ne'er-do-weels find it easy to be included. The clumsy ceremonial and sumptuous hideosity of the house of entertainment are minutely and conscientiously described,—the costly serving of impossible viands, the persons of the host and of his wife Fortunata, with the ineffably queer contrast between their naïve grossness and their æsthetic affectations, their good temper and bad taste. Then we have the motley assemblage of guests, who, when Trimalchio leaves the table for a few minutes, all break out into uproarious talk. They have had just wine enough to reveal themselves without stint or shame. Two, a trifle more maudlin than the rest, solemnly discuss the folly and danger of too frequent baths. A morose old fellow interrupts them to bemoan the degeneracy of the times, the frightful decay of religion,—above all, the high cost of living. He will tell anybody who will listen to him, how cheap bread used to be, and how big the loaves when a certain Safinius was Ædile. After Trimalchio comes back, he makes a pompous attempt at turning the conversation to higher themes. He has heard that literature and art are the proper things to discuss at banquets, and he calls attention to the splendor of his own table ware, and repeats what they used to tell him at school about Homer. His elderly spouse, Fortunata, who has had a little too much wine since she joined the company at dessert, now obliges them with a dance; after which the fun becomes fast and furious, and unutterable anecdotes are in order. Trimalchio himself tells a ghost story; then, lapsing into a sentimental mood, he begins to recite his own last will and testament, and is so overcome by the generosity of his own posthumous provisions that he bursts into tears, and blubbers out an epitaph which begins, «Here lies Gaius Pompeius Trimalchio, the new Mæcenas,» and closes with the touching words, «He left thirty million sesterces, and never attended a course of Philosophy. Stranger, go thou and do likewise!»

The wit, spirit, and dramatic life of the whole scene are wonderful; the satire on the high life of the day and its frantic luxury is audacious and merciless. So hearty, infectious, and in the main, wholesome a laugh is not to be found elsewhere in all the Latin classics; not even in Horace, or Terence, or the gayest letters of Cicero. If, as appears likely enough, Tigellinus himself was glanced at in the demurely detailed solecisms and ineptitudes of Trimalchio at table, we really cannot wonder that Petronius's life was forfeit. All other and graver injuries would be light to a man of that description, beside the doom of being made supremely and eternally ridiculous.

Each one of the heterogeneous mob at Trimalchio's table is made to speak his own proper and inevitable dialect. Eucolpius, the hero, talks the cultivated Latin of his day — the Latin of a man who also knows Greek. But rustic and otherwise vulgar idioms come naturally to the lips of other guests; and there is a spice of racy old Roman slang — of the sort, no doubt, over which Cicero and his friend Papirius Pætus used to chuckle in their *soixantaine*, and which diverted them as the most polished Greek epigram could not do.

The friends manage to slip away during the emotion occasioned by Trimalchio's epitaph, and resume their vagrant life. Presently they have a furious quarrel, and after they have parted company, Eucolpius, while wandering disconsolately through a richly frescoed portico in a certain seaside town, falls in with a fat and unappreciated poet named Eumolpus, who is also a great connoisseur in art, and explains the paintings. These two join fortunes in their turn, and finally arrive together at Cortona, «the most ancient town in Italy,» the manners and customs of whose citizens are described with an elaborate irony, of which, amusing as it is, we suspect that we do not appreciate quite all the delicate malice. Eumolpus, who has written long poems, both on the ‹Capture of Troy› and the ‹Civil War,› is lavish of recitations from these neglected masterpieces: and his poetry is by no means bad; though in the midst of its most serious and dignified passages, the reader is liable to be irresistibly tickled by a sly touch of irreverent Virgilian parody.

The MS. of the ‹Cena Trimalchionis› was first discovered in a convent at Trau in Dalmatia, in 1650, and published at Padua four years later. It has been several times translated; and considering the obvious affinities between Petronius and the more polished representatives of «l'esprit Gaulois,» one would have expected the French translations to be the best of all. But the most noteworthy and complete of these, by Héguin de Guerle of the Academy of Lyons, is weakened by excessive diffuseness; and is not to be compared in point, pith, and color, with a German version by Heinrich Merkens, published—strange to say, without any paraphernalia of notes or parade of scholarship—at Jena in 1876.

Besides the fragments of the 'Satiricon,' there are a good many others, both in prose and verse,—some of the latter very charming,—which are attributed with reasonable if not absolute certainty to Petronius Arbiter. One thinks at times with an impatience bordering on exasperation of all the lost books of the 'Satiricon,' and of what they might have told us concerning the habits and humors of the dead and gone Romans; but the rigid moralist will be apt to consider that what we have is enough.

Harriet Waters Preston

THE ADVENTURE OF THE CLOAK

Ascyltos wished to push on to Naples that very day. «But,» say I, «it is most imprudent to go to a place where we may be sure close search will be made for us. Let us rather keep clear of the city, and travel about for a few days; we have enough money to do it comfortably.» He falls in with my plan, and we set out for a town, charmingly situated among smiling fields, where not a few of our friends were enjoying the pleasures of the season. Hardly however had we accomplished half our journey, when bucketfuls of rain began to fall from a great cloud, and we fled for refuge to a wayside inn, where we found many others in like plight with ourselves. The crowd prevented our being watched; and so we examined with curious eyes to see what theft stood easiest to our hands, and presently Ascyltos picked up a little sack which proved to contain many gold pieces. Rejoicing that our first omen should be so lucky, but afraid that the bag might be missed, we slipped out by the back door. Here we saw a groom saddling some horses, who presently entered the house in search of something he had forgotten; and during his absence I undid the cords, and made off with a gorgeous cloak which was bound to one of the saddles. Then skirting the stable walls, we took refuge in a wood hard by. Safe in its recesses, we had a great discussion as to the best disposition of our treasure, that we might not excite any suspicion either of being thieves or of possessing valuables. Finally we determined to sew the money into the lining of a worn mantle, which I then threw over my shoulders, while Ascyltos took charge of the cloak; and we planned to make our way by unfrequented roads to the city. But just as we were getting out of the forest, we heard on our left: "They won't escape: they went into the wood. Split up the party and make a thorough search. In this way we shall catch them easily." When we heard this we were so frightened that Ascyltos plunged off through the briers toward town, while I rushed back into the wood at such a pace that the precious mantle fell from my shoulders without my knowing it. Worn out at last, and incapable of walking a step further, I threw myself down in the shade of a tree, and then noticed for the first time that my mantle was gone. Grief restored my strength; and rising, I set about recovering my treasure. After a long and fruitless search, overcome by fatigue and sorrow, I found myself in a deep thicket, where for four hours, melancholy and alone, I stayed amid the horrid shades. When I had at last resolved to leave this place, on a sudden I came face to face with a peasant. Then in truth I had need of all my firmness; nor did it fail me. I went boldly up to him, and asked him the way to the city, declaring that I was lost in the forest. My appearance roused his compassion, for I was pale as death and covered with mud; and after asking if I had seen any one in the wood, and receiving a negative answer, he obligingly put me on the highroad, where he met two of his friends, who reported that they had scoured every forest-path and found nothing but the mantle, which they displayed. I had not sufficient audacity to claim it as mine, you may easily believe, though I knew it well enough and its value; but how I regretted it and sighed for the loss of my fortune! The peasants, however, suspected nothing, and with ever more and more lagging footsteps I pursued my way.

It was late when I reached the city; and there at the first inn I found Ascyltos lying, half dead with fatigue, on a miserable pallet. I let myself fall on another bed, and couldn't utter a single word. Greatly disturbed at not seeing my mantle, he demanded it of me in the most peremptory tones. I was too weak to articulate, and a melancholy glance was my only answer. Later, when my strength returned, I unfolded our misfortune to Ascyltos. He thought I was joking; and in spite of my tears and solemn protestations, did not entirely lay aside his suspicions, but seemed inclined to think that I wanted to cheat him out of the money. This distressed me; and still more the consciousness that the police were on our tracks. When I spoke of this to Ascyltos, he took it lightly enough, because he had escaped from their clutches before. He assured me that we were perfectly safe, as we had no acquaintances, and no one had seen us. Yet we would have liked to feign illness, and keep to our bedroom; but our money was gone, and we had to set out sooner than we had planned, and under the pressure of need sell some of our garments.

As night was closing in, we came to a market-place where we saw a quantity of things on sale, not valuable in truth, and of which the ownership was so questionable that night was surely the best time to dispose of them. We too had brought the stolen cloak; and finding the opportunity so favorable, we took up our stand in a corner, and unfolded an edge of the garment, in the hope that its splendor might attract a purchaser. In a few minutes up comes a peasant well known to me by sight, with a young woman alongside, and begins to examine the cloak carefully. On his part Ascyltos cast a glance towards the shoulders of the rustic, and stood spell-bound; for he saw it was the very man who had picked up my mantle in the forest, neither more nor less. But Ascyltos could not believe his eyes; and to make sure, under pretext of drawing the would-be purchaser towards him, he drew the mantle from his shoulders and fingered it carefully.

Oh, wonderful irony of fortune! the peasant had never felt the seams, and was ready to sell it for a mere mass of rags, which a beggar would scorn. As soon as he had made sure that our deposit was intact, Ascyltos, after surveying the man, drew me to one side and—«Learn, brother,» said he, «that the treasure for which I lamented is restored to us. That is the very mantle and the money in it, to the best of my belief. Now what are we to do to get it back?» I was delighted, not only because I saw the plunder, but because fortune had cleared me of so base a suspicion. I wanted no beating about the bush, but a straightforward appeal to justice; and should the man refuse to give up another's property on demand, his summons to court.

But Ascyltos stood in dread of the law. «Who knows us here,» said he, «or who would believe what we said? Better buy it, since we know its value, even though it be ours already, than get into court. We shall get it cheap.

"'What is the use of laws, where our lady Money sits queen, or
Where a man who is poor never has right on his side?
Round their frugal board the philosophers mourn at such fashions,
Yet they too have been found selling their speeches for gold.
So the judges' rights are reduced to a tariff of prices;
Knights, when they sit on the bench, prove that the case has been bought.'"

But save for one small coin, with which we had meant to buy pease and beans, we were penniless. So not to lose our hold, nor run the risk of letting slip the better bargain, we came down in the price of the cloak As soon as we had unfolded our merchandise, the woman, who with covered head had been standing at the peasant's side, grasped the garment with both hands, screaming at the top of her voice that she had caught her thieves. In response, for the sake of doing something, though we were horribly frightened, we seized the torn and dirty mantle, and with equal energy announced that it was our property. But our case was weaker than theirs by far, and the crowd, which ran up at the noise, enjoyed a hearty laugh at our expense; seeing that the others were claiming a splendid garment, and we one that was dirty and covered with patches. When they had had their laugh out, Ascyltos said, "You see a man loves his own best: let them give us back our mantle and take their cloak." This bargain suited both the peasant and the woman; but up came two sheriffs — two night-hawks, rather — and wanted to appropriate the cloak. They demanded that both garments should be deposited with them, saying the judge would decide on the merits of the case the following day. And they said moreover that the real question was, against which party a charge of theft could be brought. They had all but settled on confiscating the goods; and a man in the crowd, bald, with pimply forehead, who had something to do with the courts, took hold of the cloak and declared that he would produce it the following day. It was clear that their real object was to get hold of the cloak and share it among themselves, feeling sure that we would not dare to present ourselves in court. True enough too, and so the case was speedily settled; for the angry peasant, disgusted at our making such a fuss about a mass of patches, threw the mantle in Ascyltos's face and ordered him to hand over the cloak, the only ground of dispute. Our treasure once more in our hands, we hurried away to the tavern, and behind closed doors had a good laugh at the sharpness of the peasant and the crowd, who had combined by their cleverness to get us back our money.

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature› by L. P. D.

TRIMALCHIO'S REMINISCENCES

Trimalchio now turned his beaming countenance in our direction. «If you don't like the wine,» said he, «I will change it. Your drink must suit you. Praise be to the gods. I don't buy it, for all that pleases your palate comes from a certain country-place of mine, which I have not yet visited. They say it lies between Terracina and Taranto. My present purpose is to add Sicily to my other estates, so that if I should want to go to Africa, I might keep to my own property on the journey. But tell me, Agamemnon, what was the subject of your discussion to-day?—for though I am no lawyer, still I have acquired all the principles of a polite education; and to prove that I keep up my studies, learn that I have three libraries, one Greek and two Latin. So give me the peroration of your address.»

When Agamemnon had begun, «Two men, one rich and one poor, were enemies—» «What is *poor?*» demands Trimalchio. «Neat point!» exclaims Agamemnon, and went on to give some sort of a learned dissertation. Presently Trimalchio interrupted him. «If the subject in hand,» says he, «be fact, there is no room for argument; if not fact, then it is nothing at all.»

As we received these and such-like statements with the warmest expressions of approval, he proceeded: «Pray, my dear Agamemnon, do you remember by any chance the twelve labors of Hercules, or anything about the story of Ulysses,—as for example, how the Cyclops dislocated his thumb with a paint-brush? I used to read Homer when I was a boy, and at Cumæ I saw with my own eyes the Sibyl hung up in a glass bottle; and when the boys said to her, ‹What do you want, Sibyl?› she used to answer, ‹*I want to die.*›

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LAUDATOR TEMPORIS ACTI

Then said Ganymede:—"You're talking in the air, and nobody gives a thought to the famine which threatens us. By Hercules! I haven't been able to get a crumb of bread to-day. And why not? The long drought. Why, I've been on short rations for a year now! The ædiles—curse 'em!—are in league with the bakers. 'One good turn deserves another,' is their motto; and so the poor toil on, and the jaws that crush them make one long holiday. Oh, if we only had some of those valiant defenders, such as I found here when first I came from Asia. That was living. This sort of thing had been going on in the interior of Sicily: there had been a drought as though Jupiter were in a rage with the Sicilians. But I remember Safinius; when I was a boy he lived by the old arch. What a keen tongue the man had! Wherever he went, he caused a flare-up! But he was an upright man, on whom you could depend—who stood by his friends—with whom you could play morra in the dark. But when he spoke in the Senate! How he dealt his adversaries one after another a knock-down blow: he didn't talk in the air, either, but went straight to the point. When he was pleading at the bar his voice would peal out like a trumpet; but he never got hot or had to clear his throat. He had a certain something of us Asiatics about him, you see. And how kindly he was! always returned your bow! never forgot a name! Just like one of us! By the same token, when he was ædile, living was dirt-cheap. Two men couldn't get to the end of a penny loaf; while those you get for the same price nowadays are about as a bull's eye. These are bad times; this colony is growing backwards like a calf's tail. And why not? We have a good-for-nothing ædile, who would rather gain a penny than save one of our lives. He lives high, and makes more in one day than all another man's fortune. I know what brought him in a thousand nummi in gold; but if we were any good, we should make him laugh out of the other side of his mouth. But we are all alike,—brave as lions at home, timid as a fox abroad. As for me, I've eaten my wardrobe, and if the scarcity continues I shall sell my little cottage. For what will become of us if neither god nor man has compassion on this colony? I wish I may starve if I don't believe it all comes from the gods! For nobody believes in heaven any longer; nobody keeps the fasts; nobody cares a straw for Jove: but all shut their eye to everything but their possessions. In olden times the women used to go barefoot to the Capitol, their hair loose and their thoughts pure, and implore Jupiter the god of Rain; and immediately the water would come down in bucketfuls, and all laughed with joy. Never a bit of it now! The feet of the women are shod, and the feet of the gods are slow; it's because we don't keep up our religious ceremonies that the fields lie waste."

"Come now," said Echion, the rag-man, "be a little more complimentary! 'Here we go up, and here we go down!' as the peasant said when he lost his spotted pig. What to-day is not, will be to-morrow. Such is life. By Hercules! our country would be all right, if it had any men in it. It's passing through a crisis just now. And that's not the whole of it. We ought to take things as we find them: the zenith is always overhead. If you were in another land, you would say that here the pigs walked round all ready roasted. And we are to have a fine treat in three days' time on the feast-day; none of your professional gladiators, but a lot of freedmen. Our friend Titus has a warm heart and a clever head. He's got something or other up his sleeve. I ought to know, for I'm a great friend of his. He's no sparer of flesh: he will give them good swords and no quarter; the spectators will have a solid heap of dead in their midst: and he can afford it. His father left him a million and a half. Suppose he spends twenty thousand: his fortune won't feel it, and his name will live forever."

Translated for 'A Library of the World's Best Literature' by L. P. D.

THE MASTER OF THE FEAST

IN THE best of humors, Trimalchio began:—"My friends, even slaves are men, and suck the same milk as ourselves, though ill-luck keeps them down in the world. And by my life! they shall soon drink of the water of freedom. In short, I have set them all free in my will. I have given, besides, a farm to Philagyras, and the woman who lives with him, and to Carrio a whole block of buildings free of taxes, and a bed with bedding. Fortunata I make my residuary legatee, and I recommend her to the care of all my friends; and I make these facts known that my slaves may love me as well now as though I were already dead."

All began to express their gratitude to their indulgent master. He took it with perfect seriousness; and ordered a copy of his will to be brought, which he repeated from the first word to the last, amid the groans of his household. Then, turning towards Habinnas, "Promise, my dearest friend," said he, "that you will build my monument according to my directions. Let there be a little dog at the feet of my statue, and deck it with garlands and perfumes, and paint about it all the incidents of my life; so by your kindness, though dead, I shall still live. Moreover, I want my lot to have a hundred feet frontage, and be two hundred feet deep. I want you to plant all kinds of apple-trees about my ashes, and plenty of grape-vines. For it is wrong to beautify the homes of the living only, and neglect those abodes where we are sure to make a longer stay. And so I beg you, above all things, to set up a notice: 'This monument does not pass to the heir.' Moreover, I will provide in my will against any insult being offered my remains: I will put one of my freedmen in charge of my sepulchre, whose business shall be to see that no nuisance is committed there. I beg you put ships on my monument, going under full sail, and my likeness, clad in robes of state, and sitting on the tribune's seat, with fine gold rings on my fingers, and scattering a bagful of money among the crowd;—you recollect when I gave a public entertainment and two denarii apiece to the guests all round. And pray have a dining-room, and all the folks enjoying themselves! At my right hand you must put a statue of my beloved Fortunata holding a dove, and leading a small dog by a leash; and have my Cicaro represented, and some big jars tightly sealed, so the wine cannot possibly run out; and see that they carve a broken urn with a boy weeping over it. Finally you must put a timepiece in the centre, so that whoever looks up to learn the hour will have no choice but to read my name." . . .

At this point Trimalchio began to weep; Fortunata and Habinnas also burst out sobbing, and all the slaves followed suit, till the dining-room resounded with lamentations, as though they were all at a funeral. I also was preparing to burst into tears, when Trimalchio checked me by the remark, "Well then, since we know that we must die, why not live while we may?"

Translated for 'A Library of the World's Best Literature' by L. P. D.

ON DREAMS

The dreams that tease us with their phantoms eerie
Come not from holy shrine nor heavenly space,
But from within. Sleep stays the limbs a-weary,
The truant spirit goes its wanton ways.
Deeds of the day, deeds of the dark. The warrior
Sees hosts in flight and hapless towns on fire;
The monarch slain confronts his fell destroyer,
Amid a weltering waste of blood-stained mire
The Forum's all-triumphant pleader trembles
Before the law, or frets within the bar;
The miser his unearthèd gold assembles,
And baying hounds the huntsman call afar;
The sinking seaman grasps the vessel keeling,
The courtesan indites a billet-doux,
The debauchee counts out his coin unwilling,
The very dogs in dreams their hare pursue.

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature› by H. W. P.

EPITAPH ON A FAVORITE HUNTING-DOG

(Attributed to Petronius Arbiter)

Native of Gaul was I, and the name they gave me was Cockle,
After a white sea-shell. I was beautiful too,
Ay, and brave! I would scour the darkest depths of the forest,
Or upon desolate hill startle the quarry hirsute.
Never was need at all of ugly chains to withhold me,
Never an insolent lash wounded my snowy skin;
Softly I used to lie in the lap of my lord or my lady,
Or on the high state bed, when I came panting home.
Even my bark, men said, awoke no terror insensate:
Only a poor dumb beast, yet with a speech of my own!
Nevertheless the doom ordained from my birthday o'ertook me,
Wherefore I sleep in earth under this tiny stone.

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature› by H. W. P.

PHILEMON (361–263 B. C.) MENANDER (342–291 B. C.)

AND THE LOST ATTIC COMEDY

BY WILLIAM CRANSTON LAWTON

Fragmentary and tantalizing as is the flotsam and jetsam drifted to us from the wreck of Greek civilization, we can yet say, of the literary masterpieces at least, that we have almost always a fair selection from the best in each kind. The bitterest loss is in lyric poetry. Probably most lovers of the old life would be tempted to give up even Pindar's cold and resounding splendor to recover the love songs of Sappho.

In the case of comedy, there can be no doubt that Aristophanes was the one exuberantly original genius, whose lonely height has been reached since then only twice at most: by Molière, and by the myriad-sided creator of Jack Falstaff, Caliban, and Bottom the weaver. If Attic comedy could have but one representative surviving in the modern world, there was no one to contest the right of Aristophanes. And yet: his very originality, his elemental creativeness, mocks the patient student who attempts to cite from him historical data, traits of manners, or even usages of the theatre! Nothing in his comic world walks our earth, or breathes our heavier air. We may as well appeal for mere facts to the adventurous Alice.

In a memorable passage at the close of Plato's 'Symposium,' after all the other banqueters are asleep, Socrates forces Aristophanes and the tragic poet Agathon — much against the will of both — to concede that their two arts are one, and that he who is a master artist in comedy can create tragedy no less. Though this seems to us like a marvelous foreshadowing of Shakespeare, it probably was in fact suggested to Plato by a process which he must have seen already far advanced; namely, the rapid approximation of the two dramatic forms to each other, until they were practically fused in the realistic melodrama, the comedy of manners. This creation is chiefly associated by the Athenians themselves with the long happy career of Philemon, though later ages preferred his younger and briefer-lived rival Menander.

These authors of comedy were right, however, in regarding as their chief master Euripides, who brought the dramatist's art down from its pedestal. He made his characters essentially human, realistic, even contemporary, in all save names and costumes. With his fussy nurses and quibbling slaves the comedy of manners begins. These later men, to be sure,—deprived of the dramatic chorus and expensive equipment generally, discarding the tragic cothurnus, set to face an audience utterly weary, or incredulous, of divine and heroic myths,—did hold the mirror up, far more frankly than Euripides dared, to the rather artificial and ignoble social conditions about them. Euripides, moreover, even in an age of religious doubt and political despair, retained a generous portion of Æschylus's noble aspiration, united with a creative fancy almost Aristophanic. Little indeed of either could survive the final fall of Athenian freedom.

Menander and Philemon catered to the diversion of a refined, quick-witted, degenerate folk, with very limited political power, and of petty social aims; perhaps best comparable, superficially, to London under the second Charles, but quite without the latent forces which lay dormant beneath England's ignominy. Doubtless even the courtly life of London had always more virtue and strength than Congreve and Vanbrugh concede. Athens, even a century after Chæronea, can hardly have been so contemptible a microcosm as the comedies depict.

These comedies are known to us chiefly through the rough and rollicking adaptations of Plautus—the more polished, and perhaps truer, versions of Terence. We agree heartily with Professor Lodge, that both these Latin playwrights set before us Greek, not Roman, life. The «gags» and local hits, in which comedy must always indulge, make no essential exception. They are almost inevitable, indeed, whether the mimic scene claims to represent Plato's ideal republic or Pluto's shadowy realm.

I offer here a handful of original translations, from the copious fragments still surviving. They will at least give a glimpse of the infinitely greater wealth lying deep beneath «the tide whose waves are years.» The sources from which we must draw, however, are most unsatisfying. Athenæus in his 'Banqueters' assures us he had read *eight hundred* plays of the 'Middle Comedy,' or transition period alone (about 400–336 B. C.). He cites from them hundreds of times,—but almost solely to verify the existence of a rare tidbit or a dainty sauce! This indicates, of course,—as J. A. Symonds reminds us,—not that poets and people were livelong epicures, but that such a mass of realistic drama contained abundant material to illustrate any and every side of Athenian life. The sober Stobæus and his scrapbook, again, would give us the impression that brief moral sermons, with an occasional thrust at the professional philosophers, were the chief staple of the comic dialogue; but this is of course no less misleading. Yet these two are our chief authorities! We again advise the English reader to peruse first the ‘Trinummus’ and the ‘Andria,’ at least. There he can mark for himself both sorts of passages,—wise saws and curious sauces,—and can see also that both together are but part of the seasoning in the general dish that was set before the greedy Demos!

It will be noticed that the earlier fragments represent (or rather, grievously misrepresent) contemporaries of Aristophanes, often placed above him by the judges and by the fickle Athenians generally. It is hard to believe their judgment well founded. Still, a single comedy of Eupolis, recovered from that unexhausted Egyptian storehouse, may come, any day, to prove that much of what we have thought was unique Aristophanic invention was but traditional commonplace on the high table-land of Attic imagination.

SUSARION

Susarion, the father of Attic comedy, is assigned to the sixth century B. C. He survives only in one brief passage of doubtful authenticity, which however strikes a note most characteristic of his guild in every age.

WOMEN

HEAR, oh ye people! This Susarion saith,
Son of Philinus out of Megara:—
We cannot without evil have a home:
For both to wed, and not to wed, are ill!

The next half-dozen passages are from fifth-century poets.

TELECLIDES

THE AGE OF GOLD

IN THE first place, Peace was as plentiful then as water is now for washing,
And the Earth no terror nor illness produced, but whatever men craved in abundance.
For every stream ran full with wine, and the loaves with the biscuits contended
Which first should enter the mouths of the folk, beseeching that men would devour them,

If they were desirous of dainties white; and the fishes came to the houses,
And broiling themselves they served themselves on platters upon the tables;
At the side of the couches ran rivers of soup, with hot sliced meat in the current;
The quails ready broiled and laid upon toast straight into men's mouths came flying.—
In those days men were exceedingly portly, a terrible people of giants.

CRATINUS

Of Cratinus we hear something from his successful rival, Aristophanes. A single couplet may serve to recall his notorious weakness.

Wine is a swift-footed steed for the minstrel, giver of pleasure:
But nothing fine a water-drinker brings to light.

HERMIPPUS

The following passage from Hermippus, beginning with a Homeric verse, is really important for the light it throws on Attic imports. A bold political allusion or two will remind us how free and powerful a critic Comedy then was.

Imports of Athens

Tell me, ye Muses, now, who hold your Olympian dwellings,
Whence Dionysus comes, as he sails over wine-colored waters;
What are the goods men bring in black ships hither to harbor!
Out of Cyrene the cauliflower comes, and hides of the oxen;
Out of Italia ribs of beef and grain in abundance;
Syracuse sends us cheese, and pork she furnishes also.
As to the Corcyræans, we pray that Poseidon destroy them
Utterly, vessels and all, for the treacherous heart that is in them!—
Rhodes provides us raisins, and figs that invite unto slumber.
Slaves from Phrygia come, but out of Arcadia, allies!
Carthage, finally, sends to us carpets, and cushions resplendent.

From the same play we have a loving disquisition on choice wines, ending quite like our modern toast, «Champagne for our real friends, and real pain for our sham friends!»

The Best Wines

Over the Thasian wine there hovers the odor of apples;
This I account by far most perfect, above all others,—
Saving only the faultless and painless liquor of Chios.
Yet there is also a certain wine, men Saprian name it:
Whensoever from off its jar the cover is taken,
Then there arises the odor of hyacinth, violets, roses;
Glorious fragrance, filling the high-roofed palace entirely;—
That is a nectar indeed; ambrosia and nectar together!
This is the wine for my friends;—Peparethian proffer my foemen!

EUPOLIS

Our single citation from Eupolis again illustrates the freedom with which the poets assailed each other, especially in the 'Parabasis,' or interlude where they spoke in their own proper character. This passage is supposed to be aimed at Aristophanes, as a poet was born in Athens. Eupolis's quotation from his rival was probably accompanied by a gesture, pointing out Aristophanes in the audience.

Honor to Home Talent

First I ask in my defense:
How have you been taught to think the foreign poets masters all?
But if any native-born, and noway less than they in wit,
Undertake the poet's craft, and hope to win himself a prize,
«He is mad and frenzied in his mind!» so run thy words!

Hearken unto me, my people. Change your feeling. Grudge it not
If a youth, one of yourselves, shall take delight in poesy.

PHRYNICHUS

Phrynichus, the comic poet, is best known to us for his tender tribute to Sophocles! It will be remembered that even Aristophanes, in the 'Frogs,' dares not ridicule for a moment the lamented and popular tragic poet.

Eulogy on Sophocles

Fortunate Sophocles! His life was long,—
An artist still, and happy, to the last.
Many the noble tragedies he wrought
Blessed his end. No sorrow he endured.

ALEXIS

The whole period of Middle Comedy is more than covered by the amazingly long life of Alexis, from 393 to 287 B. C. His view of life as a brief passing show is characteristic of the decadence, and is repeated far more impressively by Menander.

VANITY FAIR

THIS is a mere excursion we enjoy,
We who are living, who are but released—
As for some festival—from death and gloom.
For our diversion we to light are sent,—
This light of life; and whoso laughs and drinks
And loves the most, in the brief time we here
May tarry, and at the banquet wins him so
The prize,—he best contented hies him home!

The next four authors cited also belong to the fourth century.

AMPHIS

LIFE AND DEATH

DRINK, and play! for life is mortal; brief the time on earth we spend:
But eternal death will be, when once that life shall find an end!

ANAXANDRIDES

HEALTH, BEAUTY, WEALTH

WHOE'ER he was that made the drinking-song,
Who put health first, as though it were the best,
So far, was right;—but second he set beauty,
And riches third! There he, you see, was daft;
For after health is wealth the chiefest thing,—
A handsome starveling is a wretched beast!

ANTIPHANES

THE COMIC POET'S GRIEVANCES

HAPPY in every way the lot
Of tragic poets! First, because the tale
Is perfectly to the spectators known,
Ere aught is said. The poet only need

Remind them: for if I say "*Œdipus,*"
Why, all the rest they know. . . .
Besides, when they have nothing more to say,
Then like a finger their machine they raise,
And that suffices for their audience.
Nothing of this have we, but everything
We must invent: new names, each circumstance,
Present conditions, the catastrophe,
The episodes. If one be overlooked,
Chremes and Pheidon hiss us from the stage.

TIMOCLES

Office of Tragedy

Man is a creature doomed to weary toil,
And many sorrows life itself contains.
As consolation to our anxious thoughts
Is this devised. The soul forgets her woes,
Led to oblivion by an alien grief.
With pleasure, and made wiser, she departs.
The tragic poets, then, consider well,
How much they help us. . . .
For each who sees a trouble, heavier far
Than he has suffered, fall on other men,
Lamenteth less his own calamity.

PHILEMON

From Philemon's ninety-eight years and ninety-seven plays surprisingly little remains. The prologue of the 'Trinummus,' however, says expressly:—

"Philemon wrote it: Plautus rendered it
In barbarous speech."

The Plautine 'Mercator,' also, is a translation from the Greek poet. His gentle nature and rather commonplace yet polished style may be indicated by the five passages here chosen.

Peace is Happiness

It is a question of philosophers,
So have I heard, whereon much time is spent,—
What is the real Good. None find it. One
Says Virtue; and another Prudence. I,

Who in the country dwell, and dig the earth,
Have found it: it is Peace! O dearest Zeus,
How loving is the goddess, and how kind!
Marriages, festivals, kin, children, friends,
Food, wine, health, riches, happiness, she gives.
And if of all these things we are deprived,
Dead is the life of men while yet they live!

TEARS

If lamentation were the cure of grief,
And he were freed from sorrow who laments,
Then would we proffer gold to purchase tears!
But now, our destiny doth pay no heed
Thereto, my lord, but ever goes its way,
The same, if thou give way to grief or no.
What boots it? Nothing! Yet our sorrow brings
The tear, as fitly as the tree her fruit!

TYRANNY OF CUSTOM

Oh, trebly blessed, trebly happy are
The beasts, who have no thought of things like these!
For never one of them is criticized,
Nor have they any artificial woes.
Unlivable the life we men must live:
The slaves of custom, subject unto law,
Bound to posterity and ancestry,—
So have we no escape from misery.

DIVERSITY OF CHARACTER

Why, pray, did he who made us, as 'tis told,
And all the beasts besides,—Prometheus,—give
To other animals one nature each?
For full of courage are the lions all,
And every hare, again, is timorous.
One fox is not of crafty spirit, one
Straightforward; but if you shall bring together
Three times ten thousand foxes, you will find
One character is common to them all.
But we,—so many as our bodies are,
No less diverse our natures you will find.

MENANDER

In his interesting chapter on the lost comedies, Mr. Symonds expressly renounces the attempt to translate from Menander, whom he gives an extremely lofty place as the «Sophocles of comedy.» This is perhaps an allusion to Matthew Arnold's famous characterization of the tragic poet,

> «Who saw life steadily, and saw it whole.»

Menander, as was almost inevitable in his age, saw life as a rather trifling and swift-passing show, hardly worth any violent expression of delight or grief. It was an age of outlived enthusiasm and lost ideals. Even in this fading twilight, Athens was still the fairest and richest of cities, a true university of books, statues, and temples: but her heroic men were only a memory.

All Terence's comedies, save the 'Phormio,' are based on lost plays of Menander. Of direct Roman allusion they contain hardly anything. The one plot is, to be sure, in several cases, skillfully framed from two Greek dramas; but the adapter's own contribution need have been little more than a graceful Latin style. Professor Lindsay seems to claim much more originality for the Roman author; and the problem cannot be definitely solved, save by the recovery of Menander's own scrolls.

In his comparatively brief life Menander surpassed his chief rival in fruitfulness, leaving a hundred comedies. His popularity also must have come quickly after death. Though he gained only eight prizes, the fragments from his plays are by far the most copious of all, amounting to two thousand four hundred verses. Tantalizing as these bits are, they fully justify the exclamation of a famous Alexandrian scholar: «O Menander, and Life, which of you has imitated the other?» Goethe, also, counted the tolerant, philosophic Greek poet among his chief teachers.

DESERT A BEGGAR BORN

If some divinity should say to me,—
«Crato, when you have died, you shall again
Be born; and shall be what you please,—dog, sheep,
Or goat, man, horse,—but live again you must:
That is your destiny. Choose what you will:»
«Anything rather,» I methinks would say,
«Make me, but man! Unjustly happiness
And sorrow fall to him, and him alone.
The horse that's excellent has better care
Than does another; if a dog prove good,
He is more prized than is the baser hound.

The valiant cock hath better sustenance,
The ignoble is in terror of the brave.
But man, if he be good, yea, excellent
And noble,— that avails not, nowadays.
The flatterer fares the best of all, and next
The sycophant; while third the rogue is found.
Rather an ass I'd spend my life, than see
Men worse than I in higher honor set!»

MONOTONY

That man I count most happy, Parmeno,
Who, after he has viewed the splendors here,
Departeth quickly, whither he hath come.
This common sun, I mean, stars, waters, clouds,
And fire,—these shall he see if he abide
A century, or if his years be few;
Nor aught more glorious shall he see than they.

THE CLAIMS OF LONG DESCENT

Our family! 'Twill be the death of me!
Pray, if you love me, mother, harp no more
Upon our family! 'Tis they to whom
Nature accords no other excellence
Who trust to monuments, or high descent,
And count how many ancestors were theirs!
Nor have they more than all men:
Who doth live
That had not grandsires? Else how came he here?
And if he cannot name them, 'tis some change
Of home, or lack of friends, accounts for this;
And wherein is he worse than those who boast?
He who is fitted for heroic deeds,
Mother, although he be an African,
Or savage Scythian,— he is noble born.
Was Anacharsis not a Scythian?

THE POOR RELATION GOES A-VISITING

I had supposed that rich men, Phanias,
Who pay no interest, did not thus lament
The whole night through, nor tossing to and fro
Cry «Woe is me»; but sweetly took their rest,
While only beggars had such miseries.

But now I see you, who are called of men
The fortunate, behaving like ourselves.
Is Worry, then, to life so close akin?
She clings to luxury; the illustrious man
She leaves not;—with the poor she waxes old!

The Misery of Tyranny

Oh, utterly accurst!
How pitiful the life they waste, their guards
Always about them, pent in citadels,
And ever ready to suspect that each
Who comes hath in his hand a dagger hid:
How bitter are the penalties they pay!

Knowledge

For many reasons 'tis unwisely said
To know thyself: more profitable it is
To know thy neighbors!

Aphorisms

The boldest man, if conscious of his guilt,
Is by that conscience made most cowardly.

The heavy stone that from the hand is hurled
We cannot check, nor word that leaves the tongue.

The envious man is foeman to himself;
In self-wrought worriment fast-bound he stands.

He who condemns before he fairly hears,
Himself is guilty—for credulity.

If all to each would lend a helpful hand,
Good fortune would be lacking then for none.

Grievous indeed has been our error, when
We are ashamed to tell the deed we do.

Thrice wretched, who by his economies
Hath hoarded hatred doubling all his wealth.

I never envied much the wealthy man,
Who nothing can enjoy of what he keeps.

'Tis not the quantity we drink that marks
The drunkard, but our own capacity!

There is no remedy for wrath, it seems,—
Unless it be a friend's unflinching word.

Who would command, and is not soldier-bred,
Leads forth but sacrifices to the foe.

The total mass of these comic fragments (chiefly from the Middle and New Comedy) is extremely large. They are most accessible in two volumes of the Didot series, ‹Fragmenta Comicorum› and ‹Aristophanes, etc.› The latter volume includes most of Menander and Philemon. There is added a Latin translation, with helpful notes. These estrays have not been translated into English,—and as a whole perhaps hardly deserve to be; but a most vivid picture of the Attic fourth century could be reconstructed from them, and numberless exquisite bits of pure poetry still glimmer in the dust.

Altogether, there is hardly another *terra incognita* so rich as this, lying so close outside the beaten track of classical scholarship. F. A. Paley, toward the end of his laborious life, made a rather flippant little volume of rhymed versions from the ‹Fragmenta Comicorum.› Symonds, in the chapter mentioned above, has some good versions. Of Menander many of the finest sustained passages were rendered by Francis Fawkes, in the free Johnsonian fashion of the last century. But the field lies fallow.

The term «comedy» is, as we have tried to illustrate in the citations, rather too narrow. Plautus's ‹Rudens,› a romantic tale of shipwreck, may well remind us of Shakespeare's ‹Tempest› or ‹Winter's Tale›; his ‹Captives› is in its essential plot a story of heroic sacrifice for friendship's sake, like the ‹Merchant of Venice.› The Greek originals of such plays may have formed a transitional class of romantic dramas, not precisely tragic, and by no means essentially comic. This was doubtless especially true of the «Middle» period, when Athens had not forgotten her more heroic past, nor renounced her freedom forever. Agathon's ‹Flower,› again, may have been rather a melodramatic opera than a drama. In general, our traditional types are entirely too few and too rigid to include the numberless masterpieces of the Attic imagination.

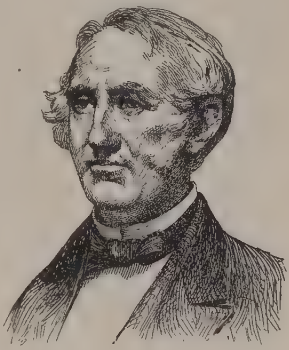
William Cranston Lawton

WENDELL PHILLIPS

(1811–1884)

BY GEORGE W. SMALLEY

Emerson said of Phillips that he was the best orator in America, because he had spoken every day for fourteen years. What Emerson meant was, that immense practice was the secret of Phillips's supremacy. It was one secret; but not, I think, *the* secret. He was one of those men in whom the orator is born, not made. It may be doubted whether he ever delivered a better speech than his first, at that memorable meeting in Faneuil Hall on the murder of Lovejoy. The germ of all his oratory lies there; the methods which he followed all his life he adopted, instinctively and unconsciously, in that critical instant of his life. He had not meant to speak. He went up to Faneuil Hall in the state which is called unprepared,—that is to say, his preparation consisted in years of thought and study, in a profound moral sense, in the possession of an imaginative and oratorical genius and of a diction which for his purpose was nearly perfect. It was the speech of Austin, Attorney-General of Massachusetts, in opposition to the object of the meeting, and his invective upon Lovejoy, which brought Phillips from the floor to the platform. I quote once more the famous sentence,—«Sir, when I heard the Attorney-General place the murderers of Alton side by side with Otis and Hancock, with Quincy and Adams, I thought those pictured lips would have broken into voice to rebuke the recreant American, the slanderer of the dead.» I asked Phillips, with whom I often talked over his speeches and his life, whether the image was thought out beforehand. «Oh no,» he answered: «it was the portraits themselves which suggested it as I spoke.»


Wendell Phillips

The answer covers much. For this austere and irreconcilable enthusiast, with the blood of the martyr in his veins, was in oratory a pure opportunist. He was a general who went into battle with a force of all arms, but used infantry or artillery or cavalry as each seemed most apt to the moment. He formed his plan, as Napoleon did, on the field and in presence of the enemy. For Phillips—and the fact is vital to all criticism of his oratory—spoke almost always, during twenty-five years of his oratorical life, to a hostile audience. His audiences were often mobs; they often sought to drive him from the platform, sometimes to kill him. He needed all his resources merely to hold his ground and to get a hearing. You cannot compare oratory in those circumstances with oratory in a dress debate, or even with the oratory of a great parliamentary contest. On this last has often hung, no doubt, the life of a ministry. On Phillips's mastery over his hearers depended sometimes his own life, sometimes that of the antislavery cause—with which, as we now all see and as then hardly anybody saw, was bound up the life of the nation. It was, in my judgment, the oratory of Phillips which insured the maintenance of that great antislavery struggle during the last ten years or more which preceded the War. His oratory must be judged with reference to that—to its object as well as to its rhetorical qualities. He had and kept the ear of the people. To have silenced that silver trumpet would have been to wreck the cause. I speak of the Abolitionist cause by itself—that which relied solely on moral forces and stood completely outside of politics.

Yet Phillips never made a concession. There was no art of speech he would not employ to win the attention of his audience. But he never softened an invective or compromised the clear logic of his statement in order to divert the hostility which confronted him. He would coax, cajole, ridicule, transpierce, or overwhelm an opponent, but never yielded a jot in principle. I have known him try all means to conciliate and then all means to crush, all within a few minutes. He had the art of so exciting curiosity, that a raging mob which half caught the first half of a sentence would still its own tumult in order to hear what was coming next. He shrank from no danger: on his unfailing cool courage and self-possession rested half the orator's power. When in Faneuil Hall he called the Attorney-General recreant, there were cries «Take that back!» and a tumult. «Fellow-citizens,» answered the young Bostonian, «I cannot take back my words.» It was the motto of his whole career. Twenty-four years later, April 21st, 1861, he was to speak in the Music Hall of Boston for the War. Against his habit, he wrote out his speech;—it was a turning-point in his history as orator and as abolitionist. He read me the speech, which began: «Many times this winter, here and elsewhere, I have counseled peace,—urged as well as I know how the expediency of acknowledging a Southern Confederacy, and the peaceful separation of these thirty-four States. One of the journals announces to you that I come here this morning to retract those opinions. No, not one of them.» Those were days of flame and fire, and I said to Phillips that they would never let him get farther. «Well,» he answered, «if I cannot say that I will say nothing.» And he read on: «I need them all,—every word I have spoken this winter, every act of twenty-five years of my life, to make the welcome I give this War hearty and hot.» The result justified his gallantry. The low murmurs which the opening sentence provoked were swept away in the storm of passionate cheers which followed.

All this dwelling upon the moral attributes of the orator may seem out of place in a brief criticism; but it is inevitable. Take away the moral impulse and there would have been no orator, no oratory, no thirty years of unmatched eloquence, no such rhetorical lesson as the speeches of Phillips now give. There is, unhappily, no adequate record of them; as there is none of the speeches of any orator of the first order, except where they were written out like those of the great Greek, or written and rewritten like his Roman rival's or like Burke's,—or unless, like those of the one great English orator of this generation, Bright, they were fully reported at the time. Phillips was never thought worth reporting till late in life. He was of the minority; and then as now, the tyranny of the majority in this country was oppressive and relentless. They meant to keep him in obscurity: it was the sun of his genius which burst through the mists and darkness which enveloped him. Traditions still fresh tell you of the beauty of Phillips's presence on the platform, of his incomparable charm of manner and voice, of his persuasiveness, and much else. But oratory, save under such conditions as I mentioned above, is evanescent. That of Phillips did its work: it is the eulogy he would value most. There was in him the poet. He had in abounding measure the sympathies without which no oratory, be its other qualities what they may, carries an audience captive. He put himself instantly on easy terms with those before him. He could be colloquial and familiar, he delighted in repartee,—in which he never found his equal,—the next moment he was among the clouds, and on the just and unjust alike descended a rain of eloquence, beneath which sprang forth those seeds of virtue and moral faith and religious hatred of wrong which presently covered the land.

There was much of the Greek in him: the sense of ordered beauty and of art. He had culture; the fire of true patriotism; serenity of mind. Not a speech in which those high qualities are not visible. They were still more evident as you heard him; and still more, perhaps, the symmetrical quality of mind and speech which is almost the rarest in modern oratory or modern life. He had indomitable good-nature on the platform. The hard things he said about men had no root in his heart; they were meant to fasten attention not on the sin only, which is abstract, but on the sinner. Intellectually a Greek, his moral nature was Hebraic, and the language of the Old Testament is inwrought in his oratory. But there was a smile on his face while the lightnings flashed. The authority with which he spoke was due largely to this coolness; but it is idle to ascribe it to any one trait, and to seek for the sources of it in mere rhetoric or mere culture. The true source of it was the whole man.

G. W. Smalley

Biographical Note.—Wendell Phillips was born in Boston, Massachusetts, November 29th, 1811; a son of the city's first mayor, and allied to the State's best blood and brains. He graduated at Harvard College in 1831, and from its Law School in 1833. A year later he was admitted to the bar. His career as a leader of men and a public orator, however, began early, and almost uninterruptedly engaged him until the close of his life. His denunciatory speech on the murder of Lovejoy, in 1837, may be reckoned the opening of his platform career. His «great speeches» followed each other rapidly. He threw himself fervently into the Abolition movement, and succeeded William Lloyd Garrison as president of the Anti-Slavery Society, in 1865. His continuous tours as a lecturer occupied all his latter years. He died February 2d, 1884.

The following selection is from one of the most famous of his general lectures. Only one other was equally identified with his name in popular regard,—that on ‹Lost Arts›; a brilliant mosaic of apocrypha from all ages, so plausibly stated that it was hard to resist conviction of their truth while listening to his easy, graceful, conversational periods, spoken as though he had just remembered some interesting facts and wished to share the pleasure with a group of friends.

THE HERO OF HAYTI

From ‹Toussaint l'Ouverture,› a lecture delivered in 1861. Copyright 1863, by Wendell Phillips

This is what Edward Everett calls the Insurrection of St. Domingo. It bore for its motto on one side of its banner, «Long live the King»; and on the other, «We claim the Old Laws.» Singular mottoes for a rebellion. In fact, it was the *posse comitatus;* it was the only French army on the island; it was the only force that had a right to bear arms: and what it undertook it achieved. It put Blanchelande in his seat; it put the island beneath his rule. When it was done, the blacks said to the governor they had created, « Now grant us one day in seven; give us one day's labor; we will buy another, and with the two buy a third,»—the favorite method of emancipation at that time. Like the Blanchelande of five years before, he refused. He said, « Disarm! Disperse! » and the blacks answered, « The right hand that has saved you, the right hand that has saved the island for the Bourbons, may perchance clutch some of our own rights; » and they stood still. This is the first insurrection, if any such there were in St. Domingo,—the first determined purpose on the part of the negro, having saved the government, to save himself. . . .

At such a moment Toussaint l'Ouverture appeared.

He had been born a slave on a plantation in the north of the island,—an unmixed negro,—his father stolen from Africa. If anything, therefore, that I say of him to-night moves your admiration, remember, the black race claims it all,—we have no part nor lot in it. He was fifty years old at this time. An old negro had taught him to read. His favorite books were Epictetus, Raynal, military memoirs, Plutarch. In the woods he learned some of the qualities of herbs; and was village doctor. On the estate, the highest place he ever reached was that of coachman. At fifty he joined the army as physician. Before he went, he placed his master and mistress on shipboard, freighted the vessel with a cargo of sugar and coffee, and sent them to Baltimore; and never afterward did he forget to send them, year by year, ample means of support. And I might add, that of all the leading negro generals, each one saved the man under whose roof he was born, and protected the family.

Let me add another thing. If I stood here to-night to tell the story of Napoleon, I should take it from the lips of Frenchmen, who find no language rich enough to paint the great captain of the nineteenth century. Were I here to tell you the story of Washington, I should take it from your hearts,—you, who think no marble white enough on which to carve the name of the Father of his Country. I am about to tell you the story of a negro who has left hardly one written line. I am to glean it from the reluctant testimony of Britons, Frenchmen, Spaniards,—

men who despised him as a negro and a slave, and hated him because he had beaten them in many a battle. All the materials for his biography are from the lips of his enemies.

The second story told of him is this: About the time he reached the camp, the army had been subjected to two insults. First their commissioners, summoned to meet the French Committee, were ignominiously and insultingly dismissed; and when afterward François, their general, was summoned to a second conference, and went to it on horseback, accompanied by two officers, a young lieutenant, who had known him as a slave, angered at seeing him in the uniform of an officer, raised his riding-whip and struck him over the shoulders. If he had been the savage which the negro is painted to us, he had only to breathe the insult to his twenty-five thousand soldiers, and they would have trodden out the Frenchmen in blood. But the indignant chief rode back in silence to his tent, and it was twenty-four hours before his troops heard of this insult to their general. Then the word went forth, «Death to every white man!» They had fifteen hundred prisoners. Ranged in front of the camp, they were about to be shot. Toussaint, who had a vein of religious fanaticism, like most great leaders,—like Mohammed, like Napoleon, like Cromwell, like John Brown, he could preach as well as fight,—mounting a hillock, and getting the ear of the crowd, exclaimed:—«Brothers, this blood will not wipe out the insult to our chief; only the blood in yonder French camp can wipe it out. To shed that is courage; to shed this is cowardice and cruelty besides;»—and he saved fifteen hundred lives.

I cannot stop to give in detail every one of his efforts. This was in 1793. Leap with me over seven years; come to 1800: what has he achieved? He has driven the Spaniard back into his own cities, conquered him there, and put the French banner over every Spanish town; and for the first time, and almost the last, the island obeys one law. He has put the mulatto under his feet. He has attacked Maitland, defeated him in pitched battles, and permitted him to retreat to Jamaica; and when the French army rose upon Laveaux, their general, and put him in chains, Toussaint defeated them, took Laveaux out of prison, and put him at the head of his own troops. The grateful French in return named him general-in-chief. «Cet homme fait l'ouverture partout," said one (This man makes an opening everywhere); hence his soldiers named him « L'Ouverture," *the opening*.

This was the work of seven years. Let us pause a moment, and find something to measure him by. You remember Macaulay says, comparing Cromwell with Napoleon, that Cromwell showed the greater military genius, if we consider that he never saw an army till he was forty; while Napoleon was educated from a boy in the best military schools in Europe. Cromwell manufactured his own army; Napoleon at the age of twenty-seven was placed at the head of the best troops Europe ever saw. They were both successful; but, says Macaulay, with such disadvantages the Englishman showed the greater genius. Whether you allow the inference or not, you will at least grant that it is a fair mode of measurement. Apply it to Toussaint. Cromwell never saw an army till he was forty: this man never saw a soldier till he was fifty. Cromwell manufactured his own army — out of what? Englishmen, the best blood in Europe; out of the middle class of Englishmen, the best blood of the island. And with it he conquered — what? Englishmen, their equals. This man manufactured his army — out of what? Out of what you call the despicable race of negroes, debased, demoralized by two hundred years of slavery, one hundred thousand of them imported into the island within four years, unable to speak a dialect intelligible even to each other. Yet out of this mixed, and as you say, despicable mass, he forged a thunderbolt and hurled it at — what? At the proudest blood in Europe, the Spaniard, and sent him home conquered; at the most warlike blood in Europe, the French, and put them under his feet; at the pluckiest blood in Europe, the English, and they skulked home to Jamaica. Now if Cromwell was a general, at least this man was a soldier. I know it was a small territory; it was not as large as the continent: but it was as large as that Attica, which with Athens for a capital has filled the earth with its fame for two thousand years. We measure genius by quality, not by quantity.

Further, — Cromwell was only a soldier; his fame stops there. Not one line in the statute-book of Britain can be traced to Cromwell; not one step in the social life of England finds its motive power in his brain. The State he founded went down with him to his grave. But this man no sooner put his hand on the helm of State than the ship steadied with an upright keel, and he began to evince a statesmanship as marvelous as his military genius. History says that the most statesmanlike act of Napoleon was his proclamation of 1802, at the peace of Amiens, when, believing that the indelible loyalty of a native-born heart is always a sufficient basis on which to found an empire, he said: « Frenchmen, come home. I pardon the crimes of the last twelve years; I blot out its parties; I found my throne on the hearts of all Frenchmen; » — and twelve years of unclouded success showed how wisely he judged. That was in 1802. In 1800 this negro made a proclamation; it runs thus: « Sons of St. Domingo, come home. We never meant to take your houses or your lands. The negro only asked that liberty which God gave him. Your houses wait for you; your lands are ready; come and cultivate them; » — and from Madrid and Paris, from Baltimore and New Orleans, the emigrant planters crowded home to enjoy their estates, under the pledged word, that was never broken, of a victorious slave.

Again, Carlyle has said, « The natural king is one who melts all wills into his own. » At this moment he turned to his armies, — poor, ill-clad, and half-starved, — and said to them: Go back and work on these estates you have conquered; for an empire can be founded only on order and industry, and you can learn these virtues only there. And they went. The French admiral, who witnessed the scene, said that in a week his army melted back into peasants.

It was 1800. The world waited fifty years before, in 1846, Robert Peel dared to venture, as a matter of practical statesmanship, the theory of free trade. Adam Smith theorized, the French statesmen dreamed, but no man at the head of affairs had ever dared to risk it as a practical measure. Europe waited till 1846 before the most practical intellect in the world, the English, adopted the great economic formula of unfettered trade. But in 1800 this black, with the instinct of statesmanship, said to the committee who were drafting for him a constitution: « Put at the head of the chapter of commerce that the ports of St. Domingo are open to the trade of the world. » With lofty indifference to race, superior to all envy or prejudice, Toussaint had formed this committee of eight white proprietors and one mulatto, — not a soldier nor a negro on the list; although Haytian history proves that with the exception of Rigaud, the rarest genius has always been shown by pure negroes.

Again, it was 1800, at a time when England was poisoned on every page of her statute-book with religious intolerance, when a man could not enter the House of Commons without taking an Episcopal communion, when every State in the Union except Rhode Island was full of the intensest religious bigotry. This man was a negro. You say that is a superstitious blood. He was uneducated. You say that makes a man narrow-minded. He was a Catholic. Many say that is but another name for intolerance. And yet — negro, Catholic, slave — he took his place by the side of Roger Williams, and said to his committee: "Make it the first line of my Constitution that I know no difference between religious beliefs."

Now, blue-eyed Saxon, proud of your race, go back with me to the commencement of the century, and select what statesman you please. Let him be either American or European; let him have a brain the result of six generations of culture; let him have the ripest training of university routine; let him add to it the better education of practical life; crown his temples with the silver of seventy years,— and show me the man of Saxon lineage for whom his most sanguine admirer will wreathe a laurel rich as embittered foes have placed on the brow of this negro: rare military skill, profound knowledge of human nature, content to blot out all party distinctions and trust a State to the blood of its sons,— anticipating Sir Robert Peel fifty years, and taking his station by the side of Roger Williams before any Englishman or American had won the right; — and yet this is the record which the history of rival States makes up for this inspired black of St. Domingo.

It was 1801. The Frenchmen who lingered on the island described its prosperity and order as almost incredible. You might trust a child with a bag of gold to go from Samana to Port-au-Prince without risk. Peace was in every household; the valleys laughed with fertility; culture climbed the mountains; the commerce of the world was represented in its harbors. At this time Europe concluded the Peace of Amiens, and Napoleon took his seat on the throne of France. He glanced his eyes across the Atlantic, and with a single stroke of his pen reduced Cayenne and Martinique back into chains. He then said to his

Council, « What shall I do with St. Domingo? » The slaveholders said, « Give it to us.» Napoleon turned to the Abbé Grégoire: « What is your opinion? » « I think those men would change their opinions if they changed their skins.» Colonel Vincent, who had been private secretary to Toussaint, wrote a letter to Napoleon, in which he said: « Sire, leave it alone: it is the happiest spot in your dominions; God raised this man to govern; races melt under his hand. He saved you this island; for I know of my own knowledge that when the Republic could not have lifted a finger to prevent it, George III. offered him any title and any revenue if he would hold the island under the British crown. He refused, and saved it for France.» Napoleon turned away from his Council, and is said to have remarked, « I have sixty thousand idle troops: I must find them something to do.» He meant to say, « I am about to seize the crown; I dare not do it in the faces of sixty thousand republican soldiers: I must give them work at a distance to do.» The gossip of Paris gives another reason for his expedition against St. Domingo. It is said that the satirists of Paris had christened Toussaint the Black Napoleon; and Bonaparte hated his black shadow. Toussaint had unfortunately once addressed him a letter, « The first of the blacks to the first of the whites.» He did not like the comparison. You would think it too slight a motive. But let me remind you of the present Napoleon, that when the epigrammatists of Paris christened his wasteful and tasteless expense at Versailles *Soulouquerie*, from the name of Soulouque, the Black Emperor, he deigned to issue a specific order forbidding the use of the word. The Napoleon blood is very sensitive. So Napoleon resolved to crush Toussaint, from one motive or another; from the prompting of ambition, or dislike of this resemblance,—which was very close. If either imitated the other, it must have been the white, since the negro preceded him several years. They were very much alike, and they were very French,—French even in vanity, common to both. You remember Bonaparte's vainglorious words to his soldiers at the Pyramids: « Forty centuries look down upon us.» In the same mood, Toussaint said to the French captain who urged him to go to France in his frigate, « Sir, your ship is not large enough to carry me.»

Napoleon, you know, could never bear the military uniform. He hated the restraint of his rank; he loved to put on the gray coat of the Little Corporal, and wander in the camp. Toussaint also never could bear a uniform. He wore a plain coat, and often the yellow Madras handkerchief of the slaves. A French lieutenant once called him a maggot in a yellow handkerchief. Toussaint took him prisoner next day, and sent him home to his mother. Like Napoleon, he could fast many days; could dictate to three secretaries at once; could wear out four or five horses. Like Napoleon, no man ever divined his purpose or penetrated his plan. He was only a negro; and so in him they called it hypocrisy. In Bonaparte we style it diplomacy. For instance, three attempts made to assassinate him all failed, from not firing at the right spot. If they thought he was in the north in a carriage, he would be in the south on horseback; if they thought he was in the city in a house, he would be in the field in a tent. They once riddled his carriage with bullets; he was on horseback on the other side. The seven Frenchmen who did it were arrested. They expected to be shot. The next day was some saint's day; he ordered them to be placed before the high altar, and when the priest reached the prayer for forgiveness, came down from his high seat, repeated it with him, and permitted them to go unpunished. He had that wit common to all great commanders, which makes its way in a camp. His soldiers getting disheartened, he filled a large vase with powder, and scattering six grains of rice in it, shook them up, and said: « See, there is the white, there is the black; what are you afraid of? » So when people came to him in great numbers for office, as it is reported they do sometimes even in Washington, he learned the first words of a Catholic prayer in Latin, and repeating it, would say, « Do you understand that? » — « No, sir. » — « What! want an office, and not know Latin? Go home and learn it! »

Then again, like Napoleon,— like genius always,— he had confidence in his power to rule men. You remember when Bonaparte returned from Elba, and Louis XVIII. sent an army against him, Bonaparte descended from his carriage, opened his coat, offering his breast to their muskets, and saying, « Frenchmen, it is the Emperor! » and they ranged themselves behind him, *his* soldiers, shouting « Vive l'Empereur! » That was in 1815. Twelve years before, Toussaint, finding that four of his regiments had deserted and gone to Leclerc, drew his sword, flung it on the grass, went across the field to them, folded his arms, and said, « Children, can you point a bayonet at me?" The blacks fell on their knees praying his pardon. His bitterest enemies watched him, and none of them charged him with love of money, sensuality, or cruel use of power. The only instance in which his sternest critic has charged him with severity is this: During a tumult, a few white proprietors who had returned, trusting his proclamation, were killed. His nephew, General Moise, was accused of indecision in quelling the riot. He assembled a court-martial, and on its verdict ordered his own nephew to be shot, sternly Roman in thus keeping his promise of protection to the whites. Above the lust of gold, pure in private life, generous in the use of his power,—it was against such a man that Napoleon sent his army, giving to General Leclerc, the husband of his beautiful sister Pauline, thirty thousand of his best troops, with orders to reintroduce slavery. Among these soldiers came all of Toussaint's old mulatto rivals and foes.

Holland lent sixty ships. England promised by special message to be neutral; and you know neutrality means sneering at freedom, and sending arms to tyrants. England promised neutrality, and the black looked out on the whole civilized world marshaled against him. America, full of slaves, of course was hostile. Only the Yankee sold him poor muskets at a very high price. Mounting his horse, and riding to the eastern end of the island, Samana, he looked out on a sight such as no native had ever seen before. Sixty ships of the line, crowded by the best soldiers of Europe, rounded the point. They were soldiers who had never yet met an equal; whose tread, like Cæsar's, had shaken Europe;—soldiers who had scaled the Pyramids, and planted the French banners on the walls of Rome. He looked a moment, counted the flotilla, let the reins fall on the neck of his horse, and turning to Christophe, exclaimed: "All France is come to Hayti: they can only come to make us slaves; and we are lost!" He then recognized the only mistake of his life,—his confidence in Bonaparte, which had led him to disband his army.

Returning to the hills, he issued the only proclamation which bears his name and breathes vengeance: "My children, France comes to make us slaves. God gave us liberty; France has no right to take it away. Burn the cities, destroy the harvests, tear up the roads with cannon, poison the wells, show the white man the hell he comes to make;" — and he was obeyed. When the great William of Orange saw Louis XIV. cover Holland with troops, he said, "Break down the dikes, give Holland back to ocean;" and Europe said, "Sublime!" When Alexander saw the armies of France descend upon Russia, he said, "Burn Moscow, starve back the invaders;" and Europe said, "Sublime!" This black saw all Europe marshaled to crush him, and gave to his people the same heroic example of defiance.

It is true, the scene grows bloodier as we proceed. But remember, the white man fitly accompanied his infamous attempt to *reduce free men to slavery* with every bloody and cruel device that bitter and shameless hate could invent. Aristocracy is always cruel. The black man met the attempt, as every such attempt should be met, with war to the hilt. In his first struggle to gain his freedom, he had been generous and merciful, saved lives and pardoned enemies, as the people in every age and clime have always done when rising against aristocrats. Now, to save his liberty, the negro exhausted every means, seized every weapon, and turned back the hateful invaders with a vengeance as terrible as their own, though even now he refused to be cruel.

Leclerc sent word to Christophe that he was about to land at Cape City. Christophe said, "Toussaint is governor of the island. I will send to him for permission. If without it a French soldier sets foot on shore, I will burn the town, and fight over its ashes."

Leclerc landed. Christophe took two thousand *white* men, women, and children, and carried them to the mountains in safety; then with his own hands set fire to the splendid palace which French architects had just finished for him, and in forty hours the place was in ashes. The battle was fought in its streets, and the French driven back to their boats. Wherever they went, they were met with fire and sword. Once, resisting an attack, the blacks, Frenchmen born, shouted the Marseilles Hymn, and the French soldiers stood still; they could not fight the 'Marseillaise.' And it was not till their officers sabred them on that they advanced, and then they were beaten. Beaten in the field, the French then took to lies. They issued proclamations, saying, "We do not come to make you slaves; this man Toussaint tells you lies. Join us, and you shall have the rights you claim." They cheated every one of his officers, except Christophe and Dessalines and his own brother Pierre; and finally these also deserted him, and he was left alone. He then sent word to Leclerc, "I will submit. I could continue the struggle for years,—could prevent a single Frenchman from safely quitting your camp. But I hate bloodshed. I have fought only for the liberty of my race. Guarantee that, I will submit and come in." He took the oath to be a faithful citizen; and on the same crucifix Leclerc swore that he should be faithfully protected, and that the island should be free. As the French general glanced along the line of his splendidly equipped troops, and saw opposite Toussaint's ragged, ill-armed followers, he said to him, "L'Ouverture, had you continued the war, where could you have got arms?" "I would have taken yours," was the Spartan reply. He went down to his house in peace; it was summer. Leclerc remembered that the fever months were coming, when his army would be in hospitals, and when one motion of that royal hand would sweep his troops into the sea. He was too dangerous to be left at large. So they summoned him to attend a council; and here is the only charge made against him,—the only charge,—they say he was fool enough to go. Grant it: what was the record? The white man lies shrewdly to cheat the negro. Knight-errantry was truth. The foulest insult you can offer a man since the Crusades is, "You lie." Of Toussaint, Hermona, the Spanish general, who knew him well, said, "He was the purest soul God ever put into a body." Of him history bears witness, "He never broke his word." Maitland was traveling in the depths of the woods to meet Toussaint, when he was met by a messenger and told that he was betrayed. He went on, and met Toussaint, who showed him two letters,—one from the French general offering him any rank if he would put Maitland in his power, and the other his reply. It was, "Sir, I have promised the Englishman that he shall go back." Let it stand, therefore, that the negro, truthful as a knight of old, was cheated by his lying foe. Which race has reason to be proud of such a record?

But he was not cheated. He was under espionage. Suppose he had refused: the government would have doubted him,—would have found some cause to arrest him. He probably reasoned thus: "If I go willingly, I shall be treated accordingly;"

and he went. The moment he entered the room, the officers drew their swords and told him he was prisoner; and one young lieutenant who was present says, « He was not at all surprised, but seemed very sad.» They put him on shipboard and weighed anchor for France. As the island faded from his sight, he turned to the captain, and said, « You think you have rooted up the tree of liberty, but I am only a branch; I have planted the tree so deep that all France can never root it up.»

Arrived in Paris, he was flung into jail, and Napoleon sent his secretary Caffarelli to him, supposing he had buried large treasures. He listened awhile, then replied, « Young man, it is true I have lost treasures, but they are not such as you come to seek.» He was then sent to the Castle of Joux, to a dungeon twelve feet by twenty, built wholly of stone, with a narrow window high up on the one side, looking out on the snows of Switzerland. In winter, ice covers the floor; in summer, it is damp and wet. In this living tomb the child of the sunny tropic was left to die. From this dungeon he wrote two letters to Napoleon. One of them ran thus:—

« Sire, I am a French citizen. I never broke a law. By the grace of God, I have saved for you the best island of your realm. Sire, of your mercy grant me justice.»

Napoleon never answered the letters. The commandant allowed five francs a day for food and fuel. Napoleon heard of it, and reduced the sum to three. The luxurious usurper, who complained that the English government was stingy because it allowed him only six thousand dollars a month, stooped from his throne to cut down a dollar to a half, and still Toussaint did not die quick enough.

This dungeon was a tomb. The story is told that in Josephine's time, a young French marquis was placed there, and the girl to whom he was betrothed went to the Empress and prayed for his release. Said Josephine to her, « Have a model of it made, and bring it to me.» Josephine placed it near Napoleon. He said, « Take it away,—it is horrible!» She put it on his footstool, and he kicked it from him. She held it to him the third time, and said, « Sire, in this horrible dungeon you have put a man to die.» « Take him out,» said Napoleon, and the girl saved her lover. In this tomb Toussaint was buried, but he did not die fast enough. Finally the commandant was told to go into Switzerland, to carry the keys of the dungeon with him, and to stay four days; when he returned, Toussaint was found starved to death. That imperial assassin was taken, twelve years after, to his prison at St. Helena, planned for a tomb as he had planned that of Toussaint; and there he whined away his dying hours in pitiful complaints of curtains and titles, of dishes and rides. God grant that when some future Plutarch shall weigh the great men of our epoch, the whites against the blacks, he do not put that whining child at St. Helena into one scale, and into the other the negro, meeting death like a Roman, without a murmur, in the solitude of his icy dungeon!

ANTIQUITY OF INVENTIONS AND STORIES

From Lecture on 'The Lost Arts'

I HAVE been somewhat criticized, year after year, for this endeavor to open up the claims of old times. I have been charged with repeating useless fables with no foundation. To-day I take the mere subject of glass. This material, Pliny says, was discovered by accident. Some sailors, landing on the eastern coast of Spain, took their cooking utensils, and supported them on the sand by the stones that they found in the neighborhood; they kindled their fire, cooked the fish, finished the meal, and removed the apparatus; and glass was found to have resulted from the nitre and sea-sand, vitrified by the heat. Well, I have been a dozen times criticized by a number of wise men, in newspapers, who have said that this was a very idle tale; that there never was sufficient heat in a few bundles of sticks to produce vitrification,—glass-making. I happened, two years ago, to meet on the prairies of Missouri, Professor Shepherd, who started from Yale College, and like a genuine Yankee brings up anywhere where there is anything to do. I happened to mention this criticism to him. «Well,» says he, «a little practical life would have freed men from that doubt.» Said he, «We stopped last year in Mexico, to cook some venison. We got down from our saddles, and put the cooking apparatus on stones we found there; made our fire with the wood we got there, resembling ebony; and when we removed the apparatus there was pure silver gotten out of the embers by the intense heat of that almost iron wood. Now,» said he, «that heat was greater than any necessary to vitrify the materials of glass.» . . .

Take the whole range of imaginative literature, and we are all wholesale borrowers. In every matter that relates to invention, to use, or beauty, or form, we are borrowers.

You may glance around the furniture of the palaces in Europe, and you may gather all these utensils of art or use; and when you have fixed the shape and forms in your mind, I will take you into the museum of Naples, which gathers all the remains of the domestic life of the Romans, and you shall not find a single one of these modern forms of art or beauty or use that was not anticipated there. We have hardly added one single line or sweep of beauty to the antique. . . .

All the boys' plays, like everything that amuses the child in the open air, are Asiatic. Rawlinson will show you that they came somewhere from the banks of the Ganges or the suburbs of Damascus. Bulwer borrowed the incidents of his Roman stories from legends of a thousand years before. Indeed, Dunlop, who has grouped the history of the novels of all Europe into one essay, says that in the nations of modern Europe there have been two hundred and fifty or three hundred distinct stories. He says at least two hundred of these may be traced, before Christianity, to the other side of the Black Sea. If this were my topic, which it is not, I might tell you that even our newspaper jokes are enjoying a very respectable old age. Take Maria Edgeworth's essay on Irish bulls and the laughable mistakes of the Irish. Even the tale which either Maria Edgeworth or her father thought the best is that famous story of a man writing a letter as follows: «My dear friend, I would write you in detail more minutely, if there was not an impudent fellow looking over my shoulder, reading every word.»—«No, you lie: I've not read a word you have written!» This is an Irish bull; still it is a very old one. It is only two hundred and fifty years older than the New Testament. Horace Walpole dissented from Richard Lovell Edgeworth, and thought the other Irish bull was the best,—of the man who said, «I would have been a very handsome man, but they changed me in the cradle.» That comes from Don Quixote, and is Spanish; but Cervantes borrowed it from the Greek in the fourth century, and the Greek stole it from the Egyptian hundreds of years back.

There is one story which it is said Washington has related, of a man who went into an inn and asked for a glass of drink from the landlord, who pushed forward a wine-glass about half the usual size; the teacups also in that day were not more than half the present size. The landlord said, «That glass out of which you are drinking is forty years old» «Well,» said the thirsty traveler, contemplating its diminutive proportions, «I think it is the smallest thing of its age I ever saw.» That story as told is given as a story of Athens three hundred and seventy-five years before Christ was born. Why! all these Irish bulls are Greek,—every one of them. Take the Irishman who carried around a brick as a specimen of the house he had to sell; take the Irishman who shut his eyes and looked into the glass to see how he would look when he was dead; take the Irishman that bought a crow, alleging that crows were reported to live two hundred years, and he meant to set out and try it; take the Irishman who met a friend who said to him, «Why, sir, I heard you were dead.» «Well,» says the man, «I suppose you see I'm not.» «Oh, no,» says he, «I would believe the man who told me a good deal quicker than I would you.» Well, those are all Greek. A score or more of them, of a parallel character, come from Athens. . . .

Cicero said that he had seen the entire Iliad, which is a poem as large as the New Testament, written on a skin so that it could be rolled up in the compass of a nut-shell. Now this is imperceptible to the ordinary eye. You have seen the Declaration of Independence in the compass of a quarter of a dollar, written with glasses. I have to-day a paper at home, as long as half my hand, on which was photographed the whole contents of a London newspaper. It was put under a dove's wing and sent into Paris, where they enlarged it and read the news. This copy of the Iliad must have been made by some such process.

In the Roman theatre,—the Coliseum, which could seat a hundred thousand people,—the emperor's box, raised to the highest tier, bore about the same proportion to the space as this stand does to this hall; and to look down to the centre of a six-acre lot was to look a considerable distance. («Considerable,» by the way, is not a Yankee word. Lord Chesterfield uses it in his letters to his son, so it has a good English origin.) Pliny says that Nero the tyrant had a ring with a gem in it, which he looked through and watched the sword-play of the gladiators,—men who killed each other to amuse the people,—more clearly than with the naked eye. So Nero had an opera-glass.

So Mauritius the Sicilian stood on the promontory of his island, and could sweep over the entire sea to the coast of Africa with his *nauscopite*, which is a word derived from two Greek words, meaning "to see a ship." Evidently Mauritius, who was a pirate, had a marine telescope.

You may visit Dr. Abbot's museum, where you will see the ring of Cheops. Bunsen puts him five hundred years before Christ. The signet of the ring is about the size of a quarter of a dollar, and the engraving is invisible without the aid of glasses. No man was ever shown into the cabinets of gems in Italy without being furnished with a microscope to look at them. It would be idle for him to look at them without one. He couldn't appreciate the delicate lines and the expression of the faces. If you go to Parma, they will show you a gem once worn on the finger of Michael Angelo, of which the engraving is two thousand years old, on which there are the figures of seven women. You must have the aid of a glass in order to distinguish the forms at all. I have a friend who has a ring, perhaps three-quarters of an inch in diameter, and on it is the naked figure of the god Hercules. By the aid of glasses you can distinguish the interlacing muscles, and count every separate hair on the eyebrows. Layard says he would be unable to read the engravings on Nineveh without strong spectacles, they are so extremely small. Rawlinson brought home a stone about twenty inches long and ten wide, containing an entire treatise on mathematics. It would be perfectly illegible without glasses. Now if we are unable to read it without the aid of glasses, you may suppose the man who engraved it had pretty strong spectacles. So the microscope, instead of dating from our time, finds its brothers in the books of Moses,—and these are infant brothers.

PIERRE OF PROVENCE AND THE BEAUTIFUL MAGUELONNE

BY OLGA FLINCH

The story of Pierre of Provence and the beautiful Maguelonne comes to us in a quaint little edition printed in Avignon in the year 1770; but goes back much farther than this date, and is one of the floating stories of the Middle Ages, which, passing from mouth to mouth and province to province, finally found their way into print in sometimes two or three different languages. There is said to be a German edition of Pierre of Provence, and there are also whispers of an Italian one. The present French edition comes without name of author or editor: and whoever the one that kindly saved it for us, he has the good grace of allowing the little story to speak for itself; naïvely relating it with a simplicity that suggests the fairy tale told of a winter evening to a group of children eagerly crowding around the log fire.

The scene is laid in Provence, which «seems always to have been the home of Poetry: be it because the sunlight, stronger and purer there than elsewhere, creates a more vivid and life-giving imagination; or because in this fresh country, hardly ever darkened by the colds of winter, it requires no effort to call forth the most smiling picture.»

This little earthly paradise had been for some time the seat of intestine wars, when Count Jean de Provence, in spite of his title to the throne, preferred «quiet obscurity to a glory built upon murder; kept his title of count, and settled at Cavaillon, where he enjoyed the fruits of his virtue in peace, and where the happiness of loving and being loved by a most beautiful and most virtuous wife meant more to him than the empire of the world.» Together this happy couple spent their time and efforts on the education of their son Pierre, who from early childhood was trained in all the arts, sciences, and accomplishments of the period, so that when «age and experience had ripened his principles, Pierre was one of the most redoubtable of knights; . . . no one could conquer him, neither in hand-to-hand fight, nor in races, nor with sword or lance. The most celebrated troubadours, the most practiced jongleurs, had to acknowledge him their master. In his twentieth year Pierre was the delight of his parents, and in the whole of Provence the talk was but of him.»

But so much valor would naturally only await an opportunity to distinguish itself further; and after a tournament in which Pierre covered himself with fresh glory, a new direction was given to his ambition. At the repast after the tournament the talk fell on Maguelonne, daughter of the King of Naples, «for whose sake all the knights seeking her father's court attempted the most astonishing feats. Much was said of her charms and her beauty. She was described minutely, and Pierre had the description repeated twenty times. One of the knights asked him if he did not intend to see the world and seek adventures. Pierre did not answer, but remained lost in thought and absent-minded.» At this time our hero was at the happy age when «the need of loving gives new life to the soul; and makes of a well-disposed character an excellent one, and of an evil-disposed character a vicious one.» The beauty of Maguelonne made a deep impression on him; and all his thoughts were now of her, of the court of Naples, and of the glories to be won there. His only sorrow was the thought of the sorrow he would cause his devoted parents by leaving them: but kneeling before his father and opening his heart to him, he «reminded him modestly of the advantages he had taken of the education granted him, of the reputation he had won; ‹but to what use,› added he, ‹are the principles you have inculcated, the little talent I have won, if I am to spend my life in inactivity? It is not for his own sake, it is in order to be an example to the world, the defender of the oppressed, the protector of the unhappy, that a knight must live his life.›» And asking his parents to weigh carefully the life awaiting him in his home against the life of the world outside, he leaves the decision with them. They see the justice of his wishes, and all preparations are made for his departure; his father recalling to him the teachings of his childhood, and his mother giving him as a parting gift three costly rings.

Pierre finally arrives in Naples, where reigns the father of the beautiful Maguelonne; but although he has a brilliant suite, he prefers to remain unknown,—that he may win the love of Maguelonne on his own merits, and also that he may not attract the attention of his father's brother, Count Jacques of Provence, who might fear that with the help of the King of Naples, Pierre would attempt to regain for his father the throne which Count Jacques had usurped. Pierre chose as his emblem two keys, and had them embroidered on his clothes and on the harness of his horses; and dressed in his richest apparel, he went the following Sunday to the tournament called in honor of Maguelonne, who was to grace it with her presence. Pierre finds the princess far exceeding all that had been said of her: inspired by her beauty, he enters the lists and conquers all his combatants, as much by his skill and agility as by his strength; and to the King's messenger, who asks the name of so valiant a stranger, he answers that he is merely a poor French knight in search of glory, who has vowed not to disclose his name.

Maguelonne is so charmed with his prowess, that the King, at her wish, orders several other tournaments, out of which Pierre comes equally victorious, each time gaining in her esteem. «She had seen many knights, but none had made the same impression on her. . . . Maguelonne was both gentle and vivacious; she had all the virtues of a tender heart, and all the qualities of an active and gifted mind: but at this time her strongest feeling was the fear that her father might lack in courtesy to the unknown knight.» Her joy was therefore great when the King invited Pierre to dine at the palace, and gave him the seat of honor at her side. «Pierre, without forgetting that he was seated next to the King, saw nothing but the beauty of the daughter. He suppressed his sighs, and his heart was the prey of the most passionate love. Maguelonne experienced the same feeling, but would not believe it: she took her emotion for natural admiration, and her tenderness for the esteem due so many virtues.»

In this way their mutual love grows, causing them to pass through all the various phases of emotion, from joy to sadness, from hope to fear, scarcely understanding what can be this new imperious feeling. After Maguelonne has passed several sleepless nights, she goes to her old nurse Nicé one morning at dawn, and confesses her love for the unknown knight; and being reproved for loving an adventurer, she says: «Nicé, you speak to me of thrones, grandeur, riches,—what is all that compared to love? You would make me despise my rank, were it to prevent me from loving the virtues of an honest man because he is neither rich nor powerful. Power should be the reward of valor and not of birth; but, cruel Nicé, who has told you that this stranger is of low birth? It is only because you fear him that you oppose my wishes. Go then to him, use all your tact to discover which is his country and who are his parents: not that I doubt him, but I would be justified in your sight. I would that you might help me with your counsel without blushing.» Maguelonne conquers all Nicé's scruples; and having assured her that whatever happens, she will marry none other than the knight of the keys, she adds: «It is late: go, my dear friend, hasten, and if necessary make your way to the unknown; question him, ask him most urgently, and if you must tell him all I feel for him, it will not cause me a blush;—love ceases to be a weakness when it is wedded to virtue. Farewell; you know my heart,—my life is in your hands.»

Pierre, who does not dare to hope that the princess will ever accept his love, is thinking over the difficulties of his position when Nicé comes to him. Assuring him of the friendship of the King and Queen, and telling him that he has inspired the princess with «the feelings which he deserves,» she begs him to disclose his name and rank, that envious courtiers may not make his silence a pretext to hurt him. Pierre declares that no fear of intrigues would make him disclose his identity; but that the sole wish to please the princess forces him to acknowledge that he belongs to an illustrious family of France. Thereupon he presents Nicé with one of the rings given him by his mother, not daring to give it to the princess herself; and Nicé, to reward him for his confidence, pledges herself to make Maguelonne accept it. She returns to find the princess more impatient than ever, in her delight over his ring able to talk of nothing but her love, spending her days and nights thinking of him and dreaming of him.

Pierre meanwhile, fearing the result of his message, seeks Nicé, who promises to help him if she is sure of the purity of his love for Maguelonne. «May I die before your eyes,» he exclaims, «if carried away by base passion I should ever cast a bold look on the one I love so tenderly. I adore Maguelonne; I would give my life for her; and if I could win her hand thereby, there is no danger that I would not brave.» Conquered by these protestations, Nicé confesses the love of the princess; Pierre promises to tell Maguelonne who he is, and sends her another ring. Their first meeting is set for the next day. Nicé meets Pierre and brings him to the princess, leaving them together overwhelmed by a happiness that finds no words to express itself. Maguelonne finally, reminding him of her great trust in him, begs him to have equal confidence in her; and kneeling before her, he confesses his vow not to disclose his name and title until he had succeeded in winning her love. Then, with Maguelonne's permission, and being assured of her love, he tells her all, and dwells upon the danger it would mean to his father, to herself, and him, if his uncle the reigning Count of Provence should hear of his intention to marry the heiress of a kingdom; by such an alliance making himself a much more redoubtable claimant to the throne of Provence.

Maguelonne trembles at the thought of the danger her lover is exposed to; but, assured that her father would approve of their union if he knew who Pierre was, «she feels that she does not lack in her duty toward her father in giving her heart and promise to so brave a knight, who is moreover of the blood of kings.» Consequently they exchange the most solemn vows; Pierre gives Maguelonne the third of his mother's rings, and she takes from her neck a golden chain which she passes around his.

But the secrecy to which they are forced naturally weighs heavy on them; and when Maguelonne is alone with Nicé she cannot help contrasting her fate with that of her poorest subject, who can freely marry the man of her choice. «'If Pierre were a reigning monarch, might he even be the most detested but powerful tyrant, he had only to will it and he could be my husband. And if he were the son of a shepherd, although he had the courage of the greatest heroes and the wisdom of the best of kings, he would be punished for daring to aspire to the hand of a princess. Yes, Nicé, this is the fate of my lover. As prince he is lost if he becomes known, as simple citizen his love would be a crime if it were discovered.' 'What reasons for discontent?' said the nurse: 'you must expect everything from time and your own prudence.'»

Pierre meanwhile gains the heart of everybody at court by his repeated triumphs, beauty, and modesty; and this awakens the jealousy of Ferrier, Duke of Normandie, who aspires to Maguelonne's hand. Confident of his strength, Ferrier begs the King to call another tournament, at which he unseats all his adversaries until in turn he is thrown off his horse by Pierre. As victor, Pierre is to continue the fight with the next adversary; and great is his surprise when he recognizes his uncle, Count Jacques of Provence. Pierre, without making himself known, tries to dissuade the count from fighting; but his uncle insists upon his rights. Pierre contents himself with merely evading the count's thrusts, until «Count Jacques, rendered furious, takes his sword in both hands; Pierre, without attempting to evade him again, only turns his head a little, and the stroke merely grazes Pierre's armor; the count by the violence of his own motion is thrown over the head of his horse and falls at the feet of Pierre's. He rises with a low murmur. Everybody is surprised at the skill and strength of the knight of the keys: nobody understands why, being so superior to the count, he should have first refused to fight him; only Maguelonne understands all. As for the count, he dared not begin again, and was obliged to acknowledge that the unknown knight was the most redoubtable and at the same time the most courteous of all those he had fought until that day.» Humiliated by his defeat, the count leaves at once, thus losing the chance of recognizing Pierre.

Before the tournament, Maguelonne had seized the opportunity of a conversation with Count Jacques to inquire after Pierre's parents; and when Pierre comes to her the next day, he hears from her that his mother is suffering great anxiety at not having heard from him, and he immediately asks Maguelonne's permission to go home and reassure his parents. But the prospect of his absence, and the fear of being forced to marry Ferrier, who will make the most of his opportunity, is more than Maguelonne can bear; and she implores Pierre not to leave, or at least not to leave without her. «'What!' exclaimed Pierre, 'you would have so great a confidence in me that you would go with me? O most adorable princess, the sacrifice which you propose deserves that I should forget the entire world to belong only to you. Well then, I will not go. But my mother! my mother to whom I am giving this great sorrow may die, and I shall be the cause of her death!› Maguelonne's heart softened, and she begged Pierre to leave and take her with him.»

Thus the lovers make up their mind to flee, and to be married as soon as they are out of reach, that Maguelonne may accompany her husband. The next night they leave, Pierre taking three horses carrying provisions, and Maguelonne taking with her all her jewels and valuables. «Maguelonne rode beside her lover; one of Pierre's servants rode ahead, and the two others behind. With the dawn of day they reached a thick wood bordering on the sea. . . . They dismounted and sat down on the grass. Maguelonne, who had been strengthened on the way by love and fear, felt tired out; she laid her head on Pierre's knees; with one of his hands he held her beautiful face, and with the other he held a veil to protect her from the dew falling from the leaves. To cleave helmets, break lances, and throw knights, demand great courage: but to be young, in love, hold in your arms in the solitude of the woods the woman who loves you, and still to treat her as a sister, is an effort of which not many knights would be capable; but Pierre was, and Maguelonne fell calmly asleep.»

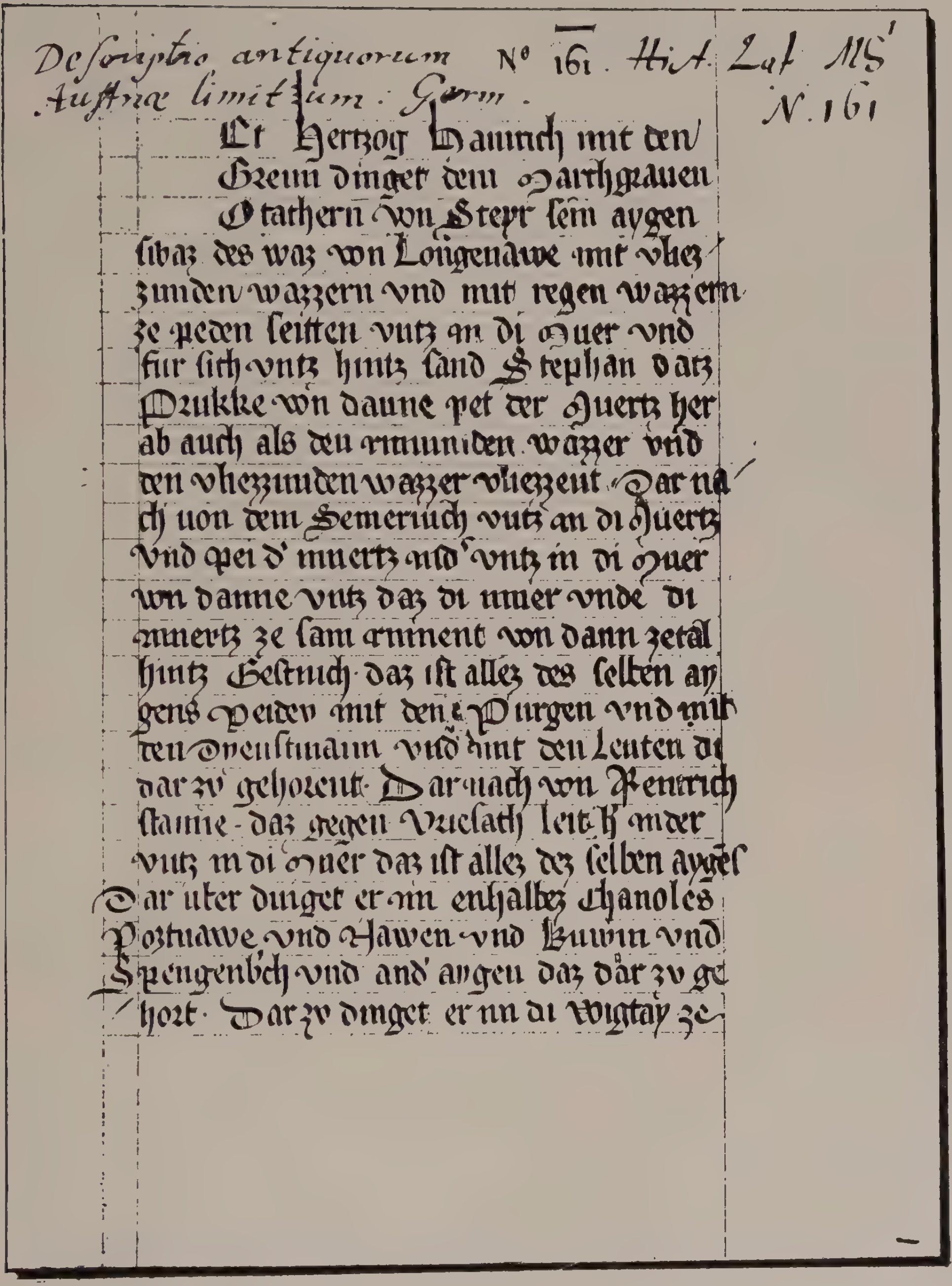
At the court of Naples all is consternation and despair. Nicé had known nothing of the lovers' flight; and after a fruitless search, the recent sight of Moorish ships on the coast gives rise to the suspicion that the unknown knight was a Moorish prince. The King sends out troops, who do not find the Moors, but do all the harm of which growing anxiety has accused the Moors.

Meanwhile our lovers were in the forest. «Maguelonne was asleep in Pierre's lap; her morning dreams with their happy fancies made her more beautiful than ever. Her face, half reclining on her lover's arm, was flushed with color; a light wind which raised her veil and fanned her cheek showed Pierre a throat whose whiteness made the color of her face all the more beautiful. Pierre looked at her, his heart full of love: from time to time he touched one of Maguelonne's hands with his lips, and tempted by her half-opened lips, he bent down a thousand times to pluck the kisses she seemed to offer him; and a thousand times fear and respect for his promises to her held him back. Ah, Pierre! Pierre! how dearly you will pay for your fatal prudence! He noticed at Maguelonne's side a little box of precious wood; he wanted to know what it contained. Ah, Pierre, is that the kind of curiosity you ought to have? He opens it, and finds therein the three rings left him by his mother which he had given her; Maguelonne kept them like a precious token of Pierre's love.

He closes the box, puts it beside him, and is lost in thought. But while he gives himself up to his reveries, a bird of prey seizes upon the box and flies away with it; Pierre follows it with his eyes; he foresees Maguelonne's disappointment at this loss: he takes off his coat, as quietly as possible spreads it over his beloved, takes a sling, tries to hit the bird with a stone; his efforts are useless: the bird perches on a rock in the water; Pierre hits it without wounding it; the bird flies away, letting the box fall into the water.»

Pierre takes a boat and goes out for the ring, is drifted out to sea by a sudden strong current, appeals for help to a ship coming his way, is taken on board by the sailors, who are Moorish pirates, and is carried away to spend five years in captivity on the coast of Africa. He renders the Sultan great services, succeeds in putting down a State conspiracy, and finally obtains as a reward his freedom and innumerable riches, which are packed in barrels and covered with salt to avoid suspicion and robbery. He embarks for Provence, but on the way the ship puts in at a small island port, and he is left behind by mistake. On reaching shore, the sailors send his barrels to a convent hospital, the superior of which has a great reputation for kindness to strangers. Pierre after many trials reaches French soil, ill and suffering; and upon the advice of some sailors he seeks help at the convent hospital, where he is tenderly cared for. Among the patients are two knights that he knew at the court of Naples. From them he hears that Maguelonne is supposed to be dead; that the King of Naples has died of grief, the Queen reigning in his place; that the Count and Countess of Provence are still mourning the loss of their son. At the news of Maguelonne's death he is thrown into a violent fever; the mother superior, Emilie, is sent for, and seeing that his illness has a mental cause, she begs him to confide in her. He tells her his story; and when he names Maguelonne and acknowledges that he is Pierre of Provence, she exclaims, «'O eternal justice, O Providence! What! you are the valiant Pierre, Maguelonne's lover? O Heaven! have mercy on me, support me and strengthen me.' . . . She was trembling and could hardly breathe, but she controlled herself: she feared that the news she had to tell the unfortunate Pierre might cause him so violent an emotion that he would not be able to bear it.»

She tells him that she is a friend of Maguelonne's, and has reason to think that Maguelonne is still alive. The next day she comes again and brings him the news that Maguelonne is in a convent, but not bound by any vow, and that she still lives but for him; and adding that she must take a journey of a few days, she hands him a letter from Maguelonne. The letter, written to Emilie, is full of love, hope, and impatience; «of sentences not finished, of lines half



Descriptio antiquorum N° 161. Hist. Lat. MS.
Austriae limitum : Germ. N. 161

Et Hertzog Hainrich mit den
Greun dinget dem Marchgrauen
Otachern von Steyr sein aygen
sivaz des waz von Lougenawe mit vliez
zunden wazzern vnd mit regen wazzern
ze peden seitten vntz an di Muer vnd
fur sich vntz hintz sand Stephan datz
Prukke von daune pet der Muertz her
ab auch als den rinnunden wazzer vnd
den vliezzunden wazzer vliezzent. Dar na
ch von dem Semeriuch vntz an di Muertz
vnd pei d' muertz nid' vntz in di Muer
von danne vntz daz di muer vnde di
muertz ze sam chumment von dann zetal
hintz Gestruch. daz ist allez des selben ay
gens peiden mit den Purgen vnd mit
den Dienstman̄ vnd mit den Leuten di
dar zv gehorent. Dar nach von Reintrich
stamme - daz gegen Vuelach leit. h̄ nider
vntz in di Muer daz ist allez dez selben aygens
Dar uber dinget er in enhalbez Chanoles
Poztnawe vnd Hawen vnd Buwin vnd
Spengenbch vnd and' aygen daz dar zv ge
hort. Dar zv dinget er im di Wigtay ze

effaced by tears, expressions that had no sense, tender ravings, a thousand ideas that clashed with each other; the purest religious sentiments and the most devoted love, the severest moral rectitude and the most passionate forgetfulness, all are united therein, and any one but a lover would have thought Maguelonne bereft of reason. She promised her friend to come and see her, and then to unite her fate with Pierre's forever; but she did not set the time.»

Pierre awaits Emilie's return most impatiently; and is finally told that she has come back, and asks him to sup with her that evening. Tortured by a thousand fears, Pierre imagines that she chooses this means of preparing him for the sad news that Maguelonne is bound by a convent vow, and goes to her in the evening with many misgivings. But she calms his fears, and tells him that she has brought Nicé, who is awaiting them in the adjoining room. «In a separate apartment Emilie had prepared a room with as much taste as magnificence; a table, carefully set, awaited five guests; Pierre and Emilie arrive, the door is opened, and Pierre finds himself in the arms of his father and mother. ‹Great God,› cries Pierre, embracing them, ‹cruel Emilie, you did not prepare me for this extreme happiness. O my father! O my mother! my joy is killing me.› They were all weeping tears of delight; the knight was in the arms now of the count, now of the countess; broken words, sighs, caresses, express the feeling that possessed him; it would have been hard for him to stand this touching scene if the presence of Nicé, who came to his aid, had not reminded him of Maguelonne's absence. He embraced Nicé, he assured her of his deep gratitude for the interest she had formerly taken in his love. ‹Ah, Nicé! will you forgive me all the sorrow that our flight must have caused you? How many times have I not blushed at the thought of the opinion my imprudence must have given you of me! And Maguelonne, the virtuous Maguelonne, the victim of my rashness, has undoubtedly suffered part of the shame of this elopement in the minds of her parents and of the people of Naples. Ah, my dear Nicé, paint to her, if you can, my remorse!› . . . ‹Will you then always be unjust to me?› exclaims Emilie, lifting her veil and embracing the knight, who finally recognizes Maguelonne. ‹How can you speak of «victim»? you are only the accomplice of my crime, if our flight was a crime; forget your remorse, and speak to me only of your love. Ah, Pierre!›»

The next day Maguelonne relates her adventures: her distress at finding herself alone on awakening, her first decision to return to Naples, and her determination then to brave the world alone rather than to return and be forced to marry another than Pierre; how she landed on the island on which the convent is now situated, and bought three houses there, with the aim of establishing a shelter for people who were ill and suffering; how she was joined in her undertaking by several young girls, who «thought it more meritorious in the sight of God to spend their days comforting suffering humanity than to waste their lives in a retreat useless to the world.» The Count and Countess of Provence, hearing of her good work, had sought the convent to obtain if possible some comfort in their great distress; and she, telling them her true name and relation to their son, had upheld their courage by her never-failing hope.

Maguelonne and Pierre are then married; the barrels of treasures are brought to light; the Queen of Naples only too gladly gives up her throne to her daughter and son-in-law; Count Jacques of Provence chooses Pierre his heir after his own death. «Pierre and Maguelonne had a long, happy, and peaceful reign; they had no sorrows except those caused by the deaths of their parents. Pierre recovered Provence; he had a son who was heir to Naples, Provence, and all the riches of Robert [the son of Count Jacques]. This couple remained lovers to their grave, into which they did not descend until ripe old age.»

And this ends our fairy tale; leaving us to imagine, perhaps not what was the actual life of those ages, but at least what was then the ideal of human glory and happiness.

Olga Flinch

PILPAY

BY CHARLES R. LANMAN

When we consider the wonderful history of ‹Pilpay's Fables,› their fame, and their charm, we naturally invest their supposititious author with a personality and a name; in fact, however, «Pilpay» is probably a changed form of an Indian word for «court-scholar,» misunderstood as a proper name, and implying therefore neither personality nor specific date. In India, from early times the parable or «example» has been the recognized method of conveying moral instruction. In the didactic literature, some general truth or some rule of life is stated in the form of a maxim, and a beast fable or other story is then added as a concrete instance or «example.» This is well illustrated by ‹The Lion-Makers› below. The folk-lore of which these tales are a reflex is not the exclusive property of any of the great religions of ancient India, but is common to Buddhism, Jainism, and Brahmanism alike. The sculptured representations of the stories upon the great Buddhist monuments of 250 B. C. make it certain that the stories themselves were familiar to the common people at that early date; and it is hardly less certain that they were so known long before that time.

The oldest and most important collection of Indian folk-lore is the Buddhist one called ‹Jataka,›—that is, ‹Birth-stories,› or stories of Gotama Buddha in his previous births: it consists of five hundred and fifty tales, each containing a moral; each is placed in the mouth of the Buddha, and in each the Buddha plays the best and most important part. It is this device of a framework or setting for the folk-tales that constitutes the principal essentially literary element of the collection. Next in importance to the Buddhist ‹Jataka› stands the Brahmanical ‹Panchatantra.› Here the material is not essentially different in kind from that of the ‹Jataka›; but again it is the setting of the material which gives the work its distinctive literary character. It is a kind of ‹Mirror for Magistrates.› Both the ‹Jataka,› written in Pali, and the ‹Panchatantra,› in Sanskrit, are still extant, and contain many of the stories which in translations of translations attained great currency and celebrity in mediæval literature.

The precise Indian original of these translations is lost; but we know that it was translated into the literary language of Persia (the Pehlevi), by command of the Sassanian king Khosru the Just, about

550 A. D. From the Pehlevi came two notable versions: one is the Old Syriac, called ‘Kalilag and Damnag,’ after the two jackals, Karataka and Damanaka, who figured prominently in the framework of the Sanskrit original; and the other is the Arabic version, called ‘Kalilah and Dimnah,’ or ‘Fables of Pilpay,’ made about 750 A. D. by Abd-allah ibn al-Moqaffa, a Persian convert to Islam under the Caliph al-Mansor.

According to the Arabic introduction, Dabshelim was the first king of the Indian Restoration, after the fall of the governor appointed by Alexander at the close of his campaign in the Panjab, B. C. 326. When firmly established, Dabshelim gave himself over to every wickedness. To reclaim the King, a Brahman philosopher takes up his parable, as did Nathan before David, and at last wins him back to virtue. The wise man is called in Arabic *bid-bah*, and in Syriac *bid-vag*. These words are traced through the Pehlevi to the Sanskrit *vidya-pati*, «master of sciences.» Accordingly *bidbah*, which has become Bidpai or Pilpay in our modern books, is not really a proper name, but an appellative, applied to a «chief pandit» or «court-scholar» of an Indian prince.

From the Arabic are descended, in the fourth generation from the original, a dozen or more versions, of which three may be mentioned as noteworthy links in the chain of tradition: the Greek one, made about 1080 by Symeon Seth, a Jewish physician; the Persian, made some fifty years later, by Nasr Allah of Ghazni; and the Hebrew, ascribed to Rabbi Joel, and probably made before 1250.

Of the descendants in the fifth degree from the original, the ‘Directorium Humanæ Vitæ,’ made about 1270 by John of Capua from the Hebrew, is distinctly the most celebrated, because it gave rise in turn to Danish, Dutch, Spanish, Italian, and French, and above all to the famous German and English versions mentioned below. But besides the ‘Directorium,’ we must notice the ‘Specimen of the Wisdom of the Ancient Hindus,’ a version into Latin from the Greek of Symeon, made by the Jesuit father Petrus Possinus (1666); and the ‘Anvár-i Suhailí’ or ‘Lights of Canopus,’ a simplified recast of Nasr Allah’s. In the second edition of his fables, La Fontaine tells us that he owes the largest part of his new material to «Pilpay, the Indian sage.» Pierre Poussin’s ‘Specimen’ was the one embodiment of his shadowy Oriental fabulist, and a French version of the ‘Lights’ was the other.

Two offshoots of the ‘Directorium’ are of unrivaled interest to the student of the beast fable. The one is the ‘Book of Examples of the Ancient Sages’; and the other is Doni’s ‘La Moral Filosophia.’ The ‘Book of Examples’ was made at the instance of Duke Eberhard im Bart, whose name and motto, «*Eberhart Graf z(u) Wirtenberg*

Attempto,» appear as an acrostic in the initials of the first sections. It was first printed about 1481, and has since been admirably edited by W. L. Holland (Stuttgart, 1860). Holland used, besides three manuscripts, two printed editions without place and year, and enumerates seventeen dated editions that appeared between 1483 and 1592. Four dated editions appeared at Ulm between 1483 and 1485! The great number of editions of the work, and their rapid succession, are the best proof of its importance as a means of instruction and amusement at the beginning of the age of printing. The examples themselves had doubtless pointed the moral of many an ancient homily long before the days of Gutenberg: but the language of the old German version of them is so remarkable for its simplicity, dignity, strength, and beauty, that we cannot wonder at its immense popularity; and to this version, more than to any other, is Europe indebted for the wide-spread knowledge of this cycle of literature from the last part of the fifteenth to the middle of the seventeenth century.

The other offshoot of the ‹Directorium›—namely, ‹The morall philosophie of Doni: drawne out of the auncient writers. A worke first compiled in the Indian tongue, and afterwardes reduced into divers other languages: and now lastly Englished out of Italian by Thomas North› (London, 1570)—is most interesting to us as English-speaking people because it is «the first literary link between India and England, written in racy Elizabethan,» a piece of «Tudor prose at its best,» a veritable English classic.

A translation of the ‹Jataka› is now issuing from the University Press of Cambridge, England, under the editorship of Professor Cowell, three volumes of which have thus far appeared: one by Robert Chalmers of Oriel College, Oxford; a second by W. H. D. Rouse of Rugby School; and a third by H. T. Francis and R. A. Neil of Cambridge. A charming reprint of North's Doni was edited by Joseph Jacobs (London, 1888). An account of the literary history of the fables of Pilpay may be found in Jacobs's book, or in Keith-Falconer's ‹Kalilah and Dimnah› (Cambridge, 1885), or in the present writer's ‹Sanskrit Reader› (Boston, 1888).

C. R. Lanman.

[The translation of the ‹Jataka› from which the selections are taken is that of Professor Cowell, referred to in the essay.]

THE TALKATIVE TORTOISE

[The story of ‹The Talkative Tortoise› we give in two of its many extant versions. The first is Rouse's translation from the Pali of the ‹Jataka› (No. 215). The second is from Sir Thomas North's translation (London, 1570) of ‹The Morall Philosophie of Doni,› the first English version of the Fables of Pilpay.]

First Version

From the ‹Jataka›

«The Tortoise needs must speak,» etc.—This is a story told by the Master while staying in Jetavana, about Kokalika. The circumstances which gave rise to it will be set forth under the Mahatakkari Birth. Here again the Master said: «This is not the only time, brethren, that Kokalika has been ruined by talking; it was the same before.» And then he told the story as follows.

Once on a time Brahmadatta was King of Benares; and the Future Buddha, being born to one of the King's court, grew up, and became the King's adviser in all things human and divine. But this King was very talkative; and when he talked there was no chance for any other to get in a word. And the Future Buddha, wishing to put a stop to his much talking, kept watching for an opportunity.

Now there dwelt a tortoise in a certain pond in the region of Himalaya. Two young wild geese, searching for food, struck up an acquaintance with him, and by-and-by they grew close friends together. One day these two said to him: «Friend tortoise, we have a lovely home in Himalaya, on a plateau of Mount Chittakuta, in a cave of gold! Will you come with us?»

«Why,» said he, «how can I get there?»

«Oh, we will take you, if only you can keep your mouth shut, and say not a word to anybody.»

«Yes, I can do that,» says he: «take me along!»

So they made the tortoise hold a stick between his teeth; and themselves taking hold so of the two ends, they sprang up into the air.

The village children saw this, and exclaimed, «There are two geese carrying a tortoise by a stick!»

[By this time the geese, flying swiftly, had arrived at the space above the palace of the King, at Benares.]

The tortoise wanted to cry out, « Well, and if my friends do carry me, what is that to you, you caitiffs? » — and he let go the stick from between his teeth, and falling into the open court-yard he split in two. What an uproar there was! « A tortoise has fallen in the court-yard, and broken in two! » they cried. The King, with the Future Buddha and all his court, came up to the place, and seeing the tortoise asked the Future Buddha a question: « Wise sir, what made this creature fall? »

« Now's my time! » thought he. « For a long while I have been wishing to admonish the King, and I have gone about seeking my opportunity. No doubt the truth is this: the tortoise and the geese became friendly; the geese must have meant to carry him to Himalaya, and so made him hold a stick between his teeth, and then lifted him into the air; then he must have heard some remark, and wanted to reply; and not being able to keep his mouth shut, he must have let himself go; and so he must have fallen from the sky and thus come by his death. » So thought he; and addressed the King: « O King, they that have too much tongue, that set no limit to their speaking, ever come to such misfortune as this; » and he uttered the following verses:

« The tortoise needs must speak aloud,
Although between his teeth
A stick he bit; yet, spite of it,
He spoke — and fell beneath.

« And now, O mighty master, mark it well.
See thou speak wisely, see thou speak in season.
To death the tortoise fell:
He talked too much, that was the reason. »

« He is speaking of me! » the King thought to himself; and asked the Future Buddha if it was so.

« Be it you, O great King, or be it another, » replied he, « whosoever talks beyond measure comes by some misery of this kind; » and so he made the thing manifest. And thenceforward the King abstained from talking, and became a man of few words.

This discourse ended, the Master identified the Birth: — « Kokalika was the tortoise then, the two famous elders were the two wild geese, Ananda was the King, and I was his wise adviser. »

Second Version

[From the earliest English version of the Fables of Bidpai: reprint London, 1888. Published by David Nutt, in the Strand.]

In the fishings of the Sophie there was a world of fowls that kept about it to feed of those fishes; and amongst them was a tortoise of the water that had close friendship with two great and fat fowls, who diving under water drove the fish all about, and they no sooner appeared almost above water, but at a chop they had them in their mouths. The lake was full of clefts; I cannot tell how but by certain earthquakes. And by little and little it began to wax dry, so that they were fain to void out the water to take out the great number of fish that were in it, that they should not die in that drought, but rather eat them up. The fowls therefore of that lake, meaning to depart out of that country, came one morning to break their fast together, and to take their leave of the tortoise their friend. The which when she saw them forsake her, she wept bitterly, and pitifully lamenting she said, «Alas! what shall I do here alone? But what thing can come worse to me than to lose the water and my friends at one instant! O poor tortoise that I am, wretched creature I! whither should I go to seek out water, that am so slow to go? I like not to tarry longer in this country. O good brethren, help me, I pray you! forsake me not in my distress! Ah, unhappy was I born in this world, that I must carry my house with me, and can put no victuals into it. In others' houses, alack! there is place enough for their necessaries; but in mine I can scant hide myself. Ah woe, woe is me, how shall I do? If ye have any pity on me, my brethren, and if ye have taken me for your friend, help me, for God's sake. Leave me not here to burst for thirst. I would gladly go with you if that you would gladly put me in some lake, and I would follow mine old trade as I have done; therefore, dear fowls, help me!»

These words did penetrate the hearts of these great water fowls; and taking no less pity on her than looking to their own profit, they said unto her, «Dear mother tortoise, we could not do better than satisfy thy desire, but alas, what means have we to carry thee hence into any lake? Yet there is an easy way to bring it to pass, if that thy heart will serve thee to take upon thee to hold a piece of wood fast in thy teeth a good while. And then we (the one on the one side of thee, and the other on the other side) will with our bills take the end of the stick in our mouths also, and so carry thee trimly into some lake, and there we would lead our lives and fare delicately. But in any case thou must beware thou open not thy mouth at any time, because the other birds that fly up and down will gladly play with thee and laugh to see thee fly in the air, thou that art used to tarry on the earth and under the water. Therefore they will tell thee marvelous wonders, and will be very busy with thee, and peradventure they will ask thee: O pretty she beast, whence comest thou, I pray thee, that thou art flying thus, and whither wilt thou? But take thou no heed to them, see them not, nor once hearken to them, I would advise thee. And if they prattle to thee, saying,—Oh, what an enterprise of birds! good Lord! what a piece of work they have taken in hand!—Whist! not a word thou, for thy life. Nor look not that we should answer them; for we having the stick in our mouths cannot speak but thou must needs fall, if the stick (by talk) fall out of our mouths at any time. Well, now thou hast heard all, how sayest thou? will thy mind serve thee? hast thou any fancy for the matter?"

"Who? I? Yes, that I have. I am ready to do anything. I will venture rather than I will tarry behind."

The fowls found out a stick, and made the tortoise hold it fast with her teeth as she could for her life, and then they each of them took an end in their mouth, and putting themselves up, straight flew into the air: that it was one of the foolishest sights to see a tortoise fly in the air that ever was seen. And behold a whole flight of birds met them, seeing them fly thus strangely, and hovered round about them, with great laughters and noises, and speaking the vilest words to them they could: Oh, here is a brave sight! look, here is a goodly jest! whoo! what bug have we here? said some. See, see! she hangeth by the throat, and therefore she speaketh not, said others; and the beast flyeth not, like a beast.

These taunts and spiteful words went to the heart of the tortoise, that she was as mad as she could be: so she could no longer hold, but answer she would (at least as she thought), and when she opened her mouth to speak, down she fell to the ground, and smashed her all to pieces; and all because she would have said,—I am an honest woman, and no thief; I would ye should know it, knaves, rascals, and ravening birds that ye are.—So that, contemning the good counsel was given her,—or to say better, because she would not believe them,—she paid her folly with death.

THE GOLDEN GOOSE

From the ‹Jataka,› No. 136

[This is interesting because traceable by literary documents, from the ‹Jataka› down to La Fontaine (Book v., No. 13, ‹La Poule aux Œufs d'Or›).]

«Contented be.»—This story was told by the Master about a sister named Fat Nanda. A lay brother at Savatthi had offered the sisterhood a supply of garlic; and sending for his bailiff, had given orders that if they should come, each sister was to receive two or three handfuls. After that they made a practice of coming to his house or field for their garlic. Now one holiday the supply of garlic in the house ran out; and the sister Fat Nanda, coming with others to the house, was told, when she said she wanted some garlic, that there was none left in the house,—it had all been used up out of hand,—and that she must go to the field for it. So away to the field she went, and carried off an excessive amount of garlic. The bailiff grew angry, and remarked what a greedy lot these sisters were! This piqued the more moderate sisters; and the brethren too were piqued at the taunt when the sisters repeated it to them, and they told the Blessed One. Rebuking the greed of Fat Nanda, the Master said, «Brethren, a greedy person is harsh and unkind even to the mother who bore him: a greedy person cannot convert the unconverted, or make the converted grow in grace, or cause alms to come in, or save them when come in; whereas the moderate person can do all these things.» In such wise did the Master point the moral; ending by saying, «Brethren, as Fat Nanda is greedy now, so she was greedy in times gone by.» And thereupon he told the following story of the past.

Once upon a time when Brahmadatta was reigning in Benares, the Future Buddha was born a brahman, and growing up was married to a bride of his own rank, who bore him three daughters named Nanda, Nanda-vati, and Sundari-nanda. The Future Buddha dying, they were taken in by neighbors and friends, whilst he was born again into the world as a golden mallard endowed with consciousness of its former existences. Growing up, the bird viewed its own magnificent size and golden plumage, and remembered that previously it had been a human being. Discovering that his wife and daughters were living on the charity of others, the mallard bethought him of his plumage like hammered and beaten gold, and how by giving them a golden feather at a time he could enable his wife and daughters to live in comfort. So away he flew to where they dwelt, and alighted on the top of the ridge-pole. Seeing the Future Buddha, the wife and girls asked where he had come from; and he told them that he was their father, who had died and been born a golden mallard, and that he had come to visit them and put an end to their miserable necessity of working for hire. «You shall have my feathers,» said he, «one by one, and they will sell for enough to keep you all in ease and comfort.» So saying, he gave them one of his feathers and departed. And from time to time he returned to give them another feather, and with the proceeds of their sale these brahman women grew prosperous and quite well-to-do. But one day the mother said to her daughters, «There's no trusting animals, my children. Who's to say your father might not go away one of these days and never come back again? Let us use our time and pluck him clean next time he comes, so as to make sure of all his feathers.» Thinking this would pain him, the daughters refused. The mother in her greed called the golden mallard to her one day when he came, and then took him with both hands and plucked him. Now the Future Buddha's feathers had this property, that if they were plucked out against his wish, they ceased to be golden and became like a crane's feathers. And now the poor bird, though he stretched his wings, could not fly, and the woman flung him into a barrel and gave him food there. As time went on his feathers grew again (though they were plain white ones now), and he flew away to his own abode and never came back again.

At the close of this story the Master said, «Thus you see, brethren, how Fat Nanda was as greedy in times past as she is now. And her greed then lost her the gold, in the same way as her greed will now lose her the garlic. Observe, moreover, how her greed has deprived the whole sisterhood of their supply of garlic; and learn therefrom to be moderate in your desires, and to be content with what is given you, however small that may be.» So saying, he uttered this stanza:—

Contented be, nor itch for further store:
They seized the swan—but had its gold no more.

So saying, the Master soundly rebuked the erring sister, and laid down the precept that any sister who should eat garlic would have to do penance. Then, making the connection, he said:—«Fat Nanda was the brahman's wife of the story, her three sisters were the brahman's three daughters, and I myself the golden mallard.»

THE GRATITUDE OF ANIMALS

From the ‹Jataka,› No. 124

«TOIL on, my brother.»—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a good brahman belonging to a noble Savatthi family who gave his heart to the Truth, and, joining the Brotherhood, became constant in all duties. Blameless in his attendance on teachers; scrupulous in the matter of foods and drinks; zealous in the performance of the duties of the chapter-house, bath-house, and so forth; perfectly punctual in the observance of the fourteen major and of the eighty minor disciplines; he used to sweep the monastery, the cells, the cloisters, and the path leading to their monastery, and gave water to thirsty folk. And because of his great goodness, folk gave regularly five hundred meals a day to the brethren; and great gain and honor accrued to the monastery, the many prospering for the virtues of one. And one day in the Hall of Truth the brethren fell to talking of how that brother's goodness had brought them gain and honor, and filled many lives with joy. Entering the Hall, the Master asked, and was told, what their talk was about. «This is not the first time, brethren,» said he, «that this brother has been regular in the fulfillment of duties. In days gone by, five hundred hermits going out to gather fruits were supported on the fruits that his goodness provided.» So saying, he told this story of the past.

ONCE on a time when Brahmadatta was reigning in Benares, the Future Buddha was born a brahman in the North, and growing up, renounced the world and dwelt with a following of five hundred hermits at the foot of the mountains. In those days there came a great drought upon the Himalaya country, and everywhere the water was dried up, and sore distress fell upon all beasts. Seeing the poor creatures suffering from thirst, one of the hermits cut down a tree, which he hollowed into a trough; and this trough he filled with all the water he could find. In this way he gave the animals to drink. And they came in herds and drank and drank, till the hermit had no time left to go and gather fruits for himself. Heedless of his own hunger, he worked away to quench the animals' thirst. Thought they to themselves, «So wrapt up is this hermit in ministering to our wants that he leaves himself no time to go in quest of fruits. He must be very hungry. Let us agree that every one of us who comes here to drink must bring such fruits as he can to the hermit.» This they agreed to do, every animal that came bringing mangoes or rose-apples or bread-fruits or the like, till their offerings would have filled two hundred and fifty wagons; and there was food for the whole five hundred hermits, with abundance to spare. Seeing this, the Future Buddha exclaimed, «Thus has one man's goodness been the means of supplying with food all these hermits. Truly, we should always be steadfast in right-doing.» So saying, he uttered this stanza:—

Toil on, my brother; still in hope stand fast,
  Nor let thy courage flag and tire:
Forget not him, who by his grievous fast
  Reaped fruits beyond his heart's desire.

Such was the teaching of the Great Being to the band of hermits.

His lesson ended, the Master identified the Birth by saying:—«This brother was the good hermit of those days, and I the hermits' master.»

THE DULLARD AND THE PLOW-SHAFT

From the ‹Jataka,› No. 123

«For universal application.»—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about the Elder, Laludayi, who is said to have had a knack of always saying the wrong thing. He never knew the proper occasion for the several teachings. For instance, if it was a festival, he would croak out the gloomy text,

«Without the walls they lurk, and where four cross-roads meet.»

If it was a funeral, he would burst out with—

«Joy filled the hearts of gods and men,»

or with—

«Oh, may you see a hundred, nay, a thousand such glad days!»

Now one day the brethren in the Hall of Truth commented on his singular infelicity of subject, and his knack of always saying the wrong thing. As they sat talking, the Master entered, and in answer to his question was told the subject of their talk. «Brethren,» said he, «this is not the first time that Laludayi's folly has made him say the wrong thing. He has always been as inept as now.» So saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadatta was reigning in Benares, the Future Buddha was born into a rich brahman's family; and when he grew up, after acquiring all the liberal arts at Takkasila, he became a world-renowned professor at Benares, with five hundred young brahmans to instruct. At the time of our story there was among the young brahmans one who always had foolish notions in his head and always said the wrong thing; he was engaged with the rest in learning the Scriptures as a pupil, but because of his folly could not master them. He was the devoted attendant of the Future Buddha, and ministered to him like a slave.

Now one day after supper the Future Buddha laid himself on his bed, and there was washed and perfumed by the young brahman on hands, feet, and back. And as the youth turned to go away, the Future Buddha said to him, « Prop up the feet of my bed before you go.» And the young brahman propped up the feet of the bed on one side all right, but could not find anything to prop it up with on the other side. Accordingly he used his leg as a prop, and passed the night so. When the Future Buddha got up in the morning and saw the young brahman, he asked why he was sitting there. «Master,» said the young man, «I could not find one of the bed supports; so I've got my leg under to prop it up instead.»

Moved at these words, the Future Buddha thought, « What devotion! And to think it should come from the veriest dullard of all my pupils. Yet how can I impart learning to him?» And the thought came to him that the best way was to question the young brahman on his return from gathering firewood and leaves, as to something he had seen or done that day; and then to ask what it was like. « For,» thought the Master, «this will lead him on to making comparisons and giving reasons, and the continuous practice of comparing and reasoning on his part will enable me to impart learning to him.»

Accordingly he sent for the young man, and told him always on his return from picking up firewood and leaves, to say what he had seen or eaten or drunk. And the young man promised he would. So one day, having seen a snake when out with the other pupils picking up wood in the forest, he said, « Master, I saw a snake.»—« What did it look like?»—« Oh, like the shaft of a plow.»—« That is a very good comparison. Snakes are like the shafts of plows,» said the Future Buddha, who began to have hopes that he might at last succeed with his pupil.

Another day the young brahman saw an elephant in the forest, and told his master.—“And what is an elephant like?”—“Oh, like the shaft of a plow.” His master said nothing; for he thought that as the elephant's trunk and tusks bore a certain resemblance to the shaft of a plow, perhaps his pupil's stupidity made him speak thus generally (though he was thinking of the trunk in particular) because of his inability to go into accurate detail.

A third day he was invited to eat sugar-cane, and duly told his master.—“And what is a sugar-cane like?”—“Oh, like the shaft of a plow.”—“That is scarcely a good comparison,” thought his master, but said nothing.

Another day, again, the pupils were invited to eat molasses with curds and milk, and this too was duly reported.—“And what are curds and milk like?”—“Oh, like the shaft of a plow.” Then the master thought to himself, “This young man was perfectly right in saying a snake was like the shaft of a plow; and was more or less right, though not accurate, in saying an elephant and a sugar-cane had the same similitude. But milk and curds (which are always white in color) take the shape of whatever vessel they are placed in; and here he missed the comparison entirely. This dullard will never learn.” So saying, he uttered this stanza:—

“For universal application he
Employs a term of limited import.
Plow-shaft and curds to him alike unknown,
The fool asserts the two things are the same.”

His lesson ended, the Master identified the Birth by saying:—“Laludayi was the dullard of those days, and I the world-renowned professor.”

THE WIDOW'S MITE

From the ‘Jataka,’ No. 109

As fares his worshiper.”—This story was told by the Master when at Savatthi, about a very poor man.

Now at Savatthi the Brotherhood, with the Buddha at their head, used to be entertained now by a single family, now by three or four families together. Or a body of people or a whole street would club together, or sometimes the whole city entertained them. But on the occasion now in question it was a street that was showing the hospitality. And the inhabitants had arranged to provide rice gruel, followed by cakes.

Now in that street there lived a very poor man, a hired laborer, who could not see how he could give the gruel, but resolved to give cakes. And he scraped out the red powder from empty husks, and kneaded it with water into a round cake. This cake he wrapped in a leaf of swallow-wort and baked it in the embers. When it was done, he made up his mind that none but the Buddha should have it, and accordingly took his stand immediately by the Master. No sooner had the word been given to offer cakes, than he stepped forward quicker than any one else and put his cake in the Master's alms-bowl. And the Master declined all other cakes offered him, and ate the poor man's cake. Forthwith the whole city talked of nothing but how the All-Enlightened One had not disdained to eat the poor man's bran-cake. And from porters to nobles and King, all classes flocked to the spot, saluted the Master, and crowded round the poor man, offering him food, or two to five hundred pieces of money, if he would make over to them the merit of his act.

Thinking he had better ask the Master first, he went to him and stated his case. «Take what they offer,» said the Master, «and impute your righteousness to all living creatures.» So the man set to work to collect the offerings. Some gave twice as much as others, some four times as much, others eight times as much, and so on, till nine crores of gold were contributed.

Returning thanks for the hospitality, the Master went back to the monastery, and after instructing the brethren and imparting his blessed teaching to them, retired to his perfumed chamber.

In the evening the King sent for the poor man, and created him Lord Treasurer.

Assembling in the Hall of Truth, the brethren spoke together of how the Master, not disdaining the poor man's bran-cake, had eaten it as though it were ambrosia; and how the poor man had been enriched and made Lord Treasurer, to his great good fortune. And when the Master entered the Hall and heard what they were talking of, he said, «Brethren, this is not the first time that I have not disdained to eat that poor man's cake of bran. I did the same when I was a Tree-sprite, and then too was the means of his being made Lord Treasurer.» So saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadatta was reigning in Benares, the Future Buddha was a Tree-sprite dwelling in a castor-oil plant. And the villagers of those days were superstitious about gods. A festival came round, and the villagers offered sacrifices to their respective Tree-sprites. Seeing this, a poor man showed worship to the castor-oil tree. All the others had come with garlands, odors, perfumes, and cakes; but the poor man had only a cake of husk-powder and water in a cocoanut shell for his tree.

Standing before it, he thought within himself, «Tree-sprites are used to heavenly food, and my Tree-sprite will not eat this cake of husk-powder. Why then should I lose it outright? I will eat it myself.» And he turned to go away, when the Future Buddha from the fork of his tree exclaimed, «My good man, if you were a great lord you would bring me dainty manchets; but as you are a poor man, what shall I have to eat if not that cake? Rob me not of my portion.» And he uttered this stanza:—

«As fares his worshiper, a Sprite must fare:
Bring me the cake, nor rob me of my share.»

Then the man turned again, and seeing the Future Buddha, offered up his sacrifice. The Future Buddha fed on the savor and said, «Why do you worship me?»—«I am a poor man, my lord, and I worship you to be eased of my poverty.»—«Have no more care for that. You have sacrificed to one who is grateful and mindful of kindly deeds. Round this tree, neck to neck, are buried pots of treasure. Go tell the King, and take the treasure away in wagons to the King's court-yard. There pile it in a heap, and the King shall be so well pleased that he will make you Lord Treasurer.» So saying, the Future Buddha vanished from sight. The man did as he was bidden, and the King made him Lord Treasurer. Thus did the poor man by aid of the Future Buddha come to great fortune; and when he died, he passed away to fare according to his deserts.

His lesson ended, the Master identified the Birth by saying:—«The poor man of to-day was also the poor man of those times, and I the Tree-sprite who dwelt in the castor-oil tree.»

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

From the ‹Jataka,› No. 97

«SEEING Quick dead.»—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a brother who thought luck went by names. For we hear that a young man of good family, named «Base,» had given his heart to the Faith, and joined the Brotherhood. And the brethren used to call him, «Here, brother Base!» and «Stay, brother Base»; till he resolved that as «Base» gave the idea of incarnate wickedness and ill luck, he would change his name to one of better omen. Accordingly he asked his teachers and preceptors to give him a new name. But they said that a name only served to denote, and did not impute qualities; and they bade him rest content with the name he had. Time after time he renewed his request, till the whole Brotherhood knew what importance he attached to a mere name. And as they sat discussing the matter in the Hall of Truth, the Master entered and asked what it was they were speaking about. Being told, he said: «This is not the first time this brother has believed luck went by names: he was equally dissatisfied with the name he bore in a former age.» So saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time the Future Buddha was a world-renowned professor at Takkasila, and five hundred young brahmans learnt the Vedas from his lips. One of these young men was named Base. And from continually hearing his fellows say, «Go, Base,» and «Come, Base,» he longed to get rid of his name, and to take one that had a less ill-omened ring about it. So he went to his master, and asked that a new name of a respectable character might be given him. Said his master, «Go, my son, and travel through the land till you have found a name you fancy. Then come back and I will change your name for you.»

The young man did as he was bidden; and taking provisions for the journey, wandered from village to village till he came to a certain town. Here a man named Quick had died, and the young brahman, seeing him borne to the cemetery, asked what his name was.

«Quick,» was the reply.—«What, can Quick be dead?»—«Yes, Quick is dead: both Quick and Dead die just the same. A name only serves to mark who's who. You seem a fool.»

Hearing this he went on into the city, feeling neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with his own name.

Now a slave-girl had been thrown down at the door of a house, while her master and mistress beat her with rope-ends because she had not brought home her wages. And the girl's name was Rich. Seeing the girl being beaten, as he walked along the street, he asked the reason, and was told in reply that it was because she had no wages to show.

«And what is the girl's name?»

«Rich,» said they.—«And cannot Rich make good a paltry day's pay?»—«Be she called Rich or Poor, the money's not forthcoming any the more. A name only serves to mark who's who. You seem a fool.»

More reconciled to his own name, the young brahman left the city, and on the road found a man who had lost his way. Having learnt that he had lost his way, the young man asked what his name was. «Guide,» was the reply.—«And has Guide lost his way?»—«Guide or Misguide, you can lose your way just the same. A name only serves to mark who's who. You seem a fool.»

Quite reconciled now to his name, the young brahman came back to his master.

«Well, what name have you chosen?» asked the Future Buddha.—«Master,» said he, «I find that death comes to ‹Quick› and ‹Dead› alike, that ‹Rich› and ‹Poor› may be poor together, and that ‹Guide› and ‹Misguide› alike miss their way. I know now that a name serves only to tell who is who, and does not govern its owner's destiny. So I am satisfied with my own name, and do not want to change it for any other.»

Then the Future Buddha uttered this stanza, combining what the young brahman had done with the sights he had seen:—

«Seeing Quick dead, Guide lost, Rich poor,
Base learned content, nor traveled more.»

His story told, the Master said, «So you see, brethren, that in former days as now this brother imagined there was a great deal in a name.» And he identified the Birth by saying:—«This brother who is discontented with his name was the discontented young brahman of those days; the Buddha's disciples were the pupils; and I myself their master.»

THE BUDDHIST DUTY OF COURTESY TO ANIMALS

From the ‹Jataka,› No. 28

«SPEAK only words of kindness.»—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about the bitter words spoken by the Six. For in those days the Six, when they disagreed with respectable brethren, used to taunt, revile, and jeer them, and load them with the ten kinds of abuse. This the brethren reported to the Blessed One, who sent for the Six and asked whether this charge was true. On their admitting its truth, he rebuked them, saying, «Brethren, hard words gall even animals: in bygone days an animal made a man who had used harsh language to him lose a thousand pieces.» And so saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time, at Takkasila in the land of Gandhara, there was a king reigning there, and the Future Buddha came to life as a bull. When he was quite a tiny calf, he was presented by his owners to a brahman who came in, they being known to give away presents of oxen to such-like holy men. The brahman called it Nandi-Visala (Great-Joy), and treated it like his own child, feeding the young creature on rice gruel and rice. When the Future Buddha grew up, he thought thus to himself: «I have been brought up by this brahman with great pains, and all India cannot show the bull which can draw what I can. How if I were to repay the brahman the cost of my nurture by making proof of my strength?» Accordingly, one day he said to the brahman, «Go, brahman, to some merchant rich in herds, and wager him a thousand pieces that your bull can draw a hundred loaded carts.»

The brahman went his way to a merchant, and got into a discussion with him as to whose oxen in the town were strong. «Oh, so-and-so's, or so-and-so's,» said the merchant. «But,» added he, «there are no oxen in the town which can compare with mine for real strength.» Said the brahman, «I have a bull who can pull a hundred loaded carts.» «Where's such a bull to be found?» laughed the merchant. «I've got him at home,» said the brahman.—«Make it a wager.»—«Certainly,» said the brahman, and staked a thousand pieces. Then he loaded a hundred carts with sand, gravel, and stones, and leashed the lot together, one behind the other, by cords from the axle-tree of the one in front to the trace-bar of its successor. This done, he bathed Nandi-Visala, gave him a measure of perfumed rice to eat, hung a garland round his neck, and harnessed him all alone to the leading cart. The brahman in person took his seat upon the pole, and flourished his goad in the air, shouting, «Now then, you rascal! pull them along, you rascal!»

«I'm not the rascal he calls me,» thought the Future Buddha to himself; and so he planted his four feet like so many posts, and budged not an inch.

Straightway the merchant made the brahman pay over the thousand pieces. His money gone, the brahman took his bull out of the cart and went home, where he lay down on his bed in an agony of grief. When Nandi-Visala strolled in and found the brahman a prey to such grief, he went up to him and inquired if the brahman were taking a nap. «How should I be taking a nap, when I have had a thousand pieces won of me?»

« Brahman, all the time I have lived in your house, have I ever broken a pot, or squeezed up against anybody, or made messes about ? » — « Never, my child. » — « Then why did you call me a rascal ? It's you who are to blame, not I. Go and bet him two thousand this time. Only remember not to miscall me rascal again. »

When he heard this, the brahman went off to the merchant and laid a wager of two thousand. Just as before, he leashed the hundred carts to one another, and harnessed Nandi Visala, very spruce and fine, to the leading cart. If you ask how he harnessed him, well, he did it in this way: first he fastened the cross-yoke on to the pole; then he put the bull in on one side, and made the other fast by fastening a smooth piece of wood from the cross-yoke on to the axle-tree, so that the yoke was taut and could not skew around either way. Thus a single bull could draw a cart made to be drawn by two. So now seated on the pole, the brahman stroked Nandi-Visala on the back, and called on him in this style: « Now then, my fine fellow! pull them along, my fine fellow! » With a single pull the Future Buddha tugged along the whole string of the hundred carts, till the hindermost stood where the foremost had started. The merchant rich in herds paid up the two thousand pieces he had lost to the brahman. Other folks, too, gave large sums to the Future Buddha, and the whole passed into the hands of the brahman. Thus did he gain greatly by reason of the Future Buddha.

Thus laying down, by way of rebuke to the Six, the rule that hard words please no one, the Master, as Buddha, uttered this stanza: —

« Speak only words of kindness, never words
Unkind. For him who spoke him fair, he moved
A heavy load, and brought him wealth, for love. »

When he had thus ended his lesson as to speaking only words of kindness, the Master identified the Birth by saying:— « Ananda was the brahman of those days, and I myself Nandi-Visala. »

MONKEYS IN THE GARDEN

From the ‹Jataka,› No. 268

«Best of all,» etc.—This story the Master told whilst dwelling in the country near South Mountain, about a gardener's son.

After the rains, the Master left Jetavana, and went on alms-pilgrimage in the district about South Mountain. A layman invited the Buddha and his company, and made them sit down in his grounds till he gave them of rice and cakes. Then he said, «If any of the holy Fathers care to see over the grounds, they might go along with the gardener;» and he ordered the gardener to supply them with any fruit they might fancy.

By-and by they came upon a bare spot. «What is the reason,» they asked, «that this spot is bare and treeless?» «The reason is,» answered the gardener, «that a certain gardener's son, who had to water the saplings, thought he had better give them water in proportion to the length of the roots; so he pulled them all up to see, and watered them accordingly. The result was that the place became bare.»

The brethren returned, and told this to their Master. Said he, «Not now only has the lad destroyed a plantation: he did just the same before;» and then he told them an old-world tale.

Once upon a time, when a king named Vissasena was reigning over Benares, proclamation was made of a holiday. The park keeper thought he would go and keep holiday; so calling the monkeys that lived in the park, he said:—

«This park is a great blessing to you. I want to take a week's holiday. Will you water the saplings on the seventh day?» «Oh, yes,» said they. So he gave them the watering-skins, and went his way.

The monkeys drew water, and began to water the roots.

The eldest monkey cried out: «Wait, now! It's hard to get water always. We must husband it. Let us pull up the plants, and notice the length of their roots: if they have long roots, they need plenty of water; but short ones need only a little.» «True, true,» they agreed; and then some of them pulled up the plants, while others put them in again and watered them.

The Future Buddha at the time was a young gentleman living in Benares. Something or other took him to this park, and he saw what the monkeys were doing.

«Who bids you do that?» asked he.

«Our chief,» they replied.

«If that is the wisdom of the chief, what must the rest of you be like!» said he; and to explain the matter, he uttered the first stanza:—

«Best of all the troop is this:
What intelligence is his!
If he was chosen as the best,
What sort of creatures are the rest!»

Hearing this remark, the monkeys rejoined with the second stanza:—

«Brahman, you know not what you say,
Blaming us in such a way!
If the root we do not know,
How can we tell the trees that grow?»

To which the Future Buddha replied by the third, as follows:—

«Monkeys, I have no blame for you,
Nor those who range the woodland through.
The monarch is a fool, to say
‹Please tend my trees while I'm away.›»

When this discourse was ended, the Master identified the Birth:—«The lad who destroyed the park was the monkey chief, and I was the wise man.»

THE ANTELOPE, THE WOODPECKER, AND THE TORTOISE

From the ‹Jataka,› No. 206

[This story is found sculptured upon an ancient Hindu monument of the greatest archæological interest, the Stupa of Bharhut. The history of the tale may accordingly be traced by actual records—in stone and in books—from 250 B. C. through Buddhist, Mohammedan, Jewish, and Christian literature, down to La Fontaine (‹Fables,› xii. 15) and later.]

«Come, tortoise,» etc.—This story the Master told at Veluvana, about Devadatta. News came to the Master that Devadatta was plotting his death. «Ah, Brethren,» said he, «it was just the same long ago: Devadatta tried then to kill me, as he is trying now.» And he told them this story.

Once upon a time, when Brahmadatta was King of Benares, the Future Buddha became an antelope, and lived within a forest, in a thicket near a certain lake. Not far from the same lake sat a woodpecker perched at the top of a tree; and in the lake dwelt a tortoise. And the three became friends, and lived together in amity.

A hunter, wandering about in the wood, observed the Future Buddha's footprint at the going down into the water; and he set a trap of leather, strong, like an iron chain, and went his way. In the first watch of the night the Future Buddha went down to drink, and got caught in the noose; whereat he cried loud and long. Thereupon the woodpecker flew down from her tree-top, and the tortoise came out of the water, and consulted what was to be done.

Said the woodpecker to the tortoise, «Friend, you have teeth, —bite this snare through: I will go and see to it that the hunter keeps away; and if we both do our best, our friend will not lose his life.» To make this clear he uttered the first stanza:—

«Come, tortoise, tear the leathern snare,
And bite it through and through,
And of the hunter I'll take care,
And keep him off from you.»

The tortoise began to gnaw the leather thong; the woodpecker made his way to the hunter's dwelling. At dawn of day the hunter went out, knife in hand. As soon as the bird saw him start, he uttered a cry, flapped his wings, and struck him in the face as he left the front door. «Some bird of ill omen has struck me!» thought the hunter; he turned back, and lay down for a little while. Then he rose up again, and took his knife. The bird reasoned within himself, «The first time he went out by the front door, so now he will leave by the back:» and he sat him down behind the house. The hunter too reasoned in the same way: «When I went out by the front door, I saw a bad omen: now will I go out by the back!» and so he did. But the bird cried out again, and struck him in the face. Finding that he was again struck by a bird of ill omen, the hunter exclaimed, «This creature will not let me go!» and turning back he lay down until sunrise, and when the sun was risen he took his knife and started.

The woodpecker made all haste back to his friends. «Here comes the hunter!» he cried. By this time the tortoise had gnawed through all the thongs but one tough thong; his teeth seemed as though they would fall out, and his mouth was all smeared with blood. The Future Buddha saw the young hunter coming on like lightning, knife in hand: he burst the thong, and fled into the woods. The woodpecker perched upon his tree-top. But the tortoise was so weak that he lay where he was. The hunter threw him into a bag, and tied it to a tree.

The Future Buddha observed that the tortoise was taken, and determined to save his friend's life. So he let the hunter see him, and made as though he were weak. The hunter saw him, and thinking him to be weak, seized his knife and set out in pursuit. The Future Buddha, keeping just out of his reach, led him into the forest; and when he saw that they had come far away, gave him the slip and returned swift as the wind by another way. He lifted the bag with his horns, threw it upon the ground, ripped it open, and let the tortoise out. And the woodpecker came down from the tree.

Then the Future Buddha thus addressed them both: «My life has been saved by you, and you have done a friend's part to me. Now the hunter will come and take you; so do you, friend woodpecker, migrate elsewhere with your brood, and you, friend tortoise, dive into the water.» They did so.

The Master, becoming perfectly enlightened, uttered the second stanza:—

> The tortoise went into the pond, the deer into the wood,
> And from the tree the woodpecker carried away his brood.

The hunter returned, and saw none of them. He found his bag torn; picked it up, and went home sorrowful. And the three friends lived all their life long in unbroken amity, and then passed away to fare according to their deeds.

When the Master had ended this discourse, he identified the Birth:—«Devadatta was the huntsman, Sariputta the woodpecker, Moggallana the tortoise, and I was the antelope.»

PRINCE FIVE-WEAPONS

From the ‹Jataka,› No. 55

[The essential feature of this story bears a striking, but probably fortuitous, resemblance to that of the Tar-baby of Uncle Remus. The narrator's naïvely religious interpretation of the Sword of Adamant is highly characteristic. Rahu is the demon that swallows the moon, and so causes eclipses.]

«When no attachment.»—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a brother who had given up all earnest effort.

Said the Master to him, «Is the report true, brother, that you are a backslider?»

«Yes, Blessed One.»

«In bygone days, brother,» said the Master, «the wise and good won a throne by their dauntless perseverance in the hour of need.» And so saying he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadatta was reigning in Benares, it was as his queen's child that the Future Buddha came to life once more. On the day when he was to be named, the parents inquired as to their child's destiny from one hundred and eight brahmans, to whom they gave their hearts' desire in all pleasures of sense. Marking the promise which he showed of a glorious destiny, these clever soothsaying brahmans foretold that, coming to the throne at the king's death, the child should be a mighty king, endowed with every virtue; famed and renowned for his exploits with five weapons, he should stand peerless throughout all the Land of the Rose-apple (India). And because of this prophecy of the brahmans, the parents named their son Prince Five-Weapons.

Now, when the prince was come to years of discretion, and was sixteen years old, the king bade him go away and study.

«With whom, sire, am I to study?» asked the prince.

«With the world-renowned professor in the town of Takkasila in the Gandhara country. Here is his fee,» said the king, handing his son a thousand pieces.

So the prince went to Takkasila and was taught there. When he was leaving, his master gave him a set of five weapons; armed with which, after bidding adieu to his old master, the prince set out from Takkasila for Benares.

On his way he came to a forest haunted by an ogre named Sticky-hair; and at the entrance to the forest, men who met him tried to stop him, saying, «Young brahman, do not go through that forest: it is the haunt of the ogre Sticky-hair, and he kills every one he meets.» But bold as a lion, the self-reliant Future Buddha pressed on, till in the heart of the forest he came on the ogre.

The monster made himself appear in stature as tall as a palm-tree, with a head as big as an arbor, and huge eyes like bowls, with two tusks like turnips, and the beak of a hawk; his belly was blotched with purple; and the palms of his hands and the soles of his feet were blue-black! «Whither away?» cried the monster: «halt! you are my prey.» «Ogre,» answered the Future Buddha, «I knew what I was doing when I entered this forest. You will be ill advised to come near me. For with a poisoned arrow I will slay you where you stand.» And with this defiance, he fitted to his bow an arrow dipped in deadliest poison and shot it at the ogre. But it only stuck on to the monster's shaggy coat. Then he shot another and another, till fifty were spent, all of which merely stuck on the ogre's shaggy coat. Hereon the ogre, shaking the arrows off so that they fell at his feet, came at the Future Buddha; and the latter, again shouting defiance, drew his sword and struck at the ogre. But like the arrows, his sword, which was thirty-three inches long, merely stuck fast in the shaggy hair. Next the Future Buddha hurled his spear, and that stuck fast also. Seeing this, he smote the ogre with his club; but like his other weapons, that too stuck fast. And thereupon the Future Buddha shouted, «Ogre, you never heard yet of me, Prince Five-Weapons. When I ventured into this forest, I put my trust not in my bow and other weapons, but in myself! Now will I strike you a blow which shall crush you into dust.» So saying, the Future Buddha smote the ogre with his right hand; but the hand stuck fast upon the hair. Then, in turn, with his left hand and with his right and left feet, he struck at the monster, but hand and feet alike clave to the hide. Again shouting, «I will crush you into dust!» he butted the ogre with his head, and that too stuck fast.

Yet even when thus caught and snared in fivefold wise, the Future Buddha, as he hung upon the ogre, was still fearless, still undaunted. And the monster thought to himself, «This is a very lion among men, a hero without a peer, and no mere man.

Though he is caught in the clutches of an ogre like me, yet not so much as a tremor will he show. Never, since I first took to slaying travelers upon this road, have I seen a man to equal him. How comes it that he is not frightened?" Not daring to devour the Future Buddha offhand, he said, "How is it, young brahman, that you have no fear of death?"

"Why should I?" answered the Future Buddha. "Each life must surely have its destined death. Moreover, within my body is a sword of adamant, which you will never digest, if you eat me. It will chop your inwards into mincemeat, and my death will involve yours too. Therefore it is that I have no fear." (By this, it is said, the Future Buddha meant the Sword of Knowledge, which was within him.)

Hereon the ogre fell a-thinking. "This young brahman is speaking the truth and nothing but the truth," thought he. "Not a morsel so big as a pea could I digest of such a hero. I'll let him go." And so, in fear of his life, he let the Future Buddha go free, saying, "Young brahman, you are a lion among men: I will not eat you. Go forth from my hand, even as the moon from the jaws of Rahu, and return to gladden the hearts of your kinsfolk, your friends, and your country."

"As for myself, ogre," answered the Future Buddha, "I will go. As for you, it was your sins in bygone days that caused you to be reborn a ravening, murderous, flesh-eating ogre; and if you continue in sin in this existence, you will go on from darkness to darkness. But having seen me, you will be unable thenceforth to sin any more. Know that to destroy life is to insure rebirth either in hell or as a brute or as a ghost or among the fallen spirits. Or if the rebirth be into the world of men, then such sin cuts short the days of a man's life."

In this and other ways the Future Buddha showed the evil consequences of the five bad courses, and the blessing that comes of the five good courses; and so wrought in divers ways upon that ogre's fears that by his teaching he converted the monster, imbuing him with self-denial and establishing him in the Five Commandments. Then making the ogre the fairy of that forest, with a right to levy dues, and charging him to remain steadfast, the Future Buddha went his way, making known the change in the ogre's mood as he issued from the forest. And in the end he came, armed with the five weapons, to the city of Benares, and presented himself before his parents. In later days, when king, he was a righteous ruler; and after a life spent in charity and other good works, he passed away to fare thereafter according to his deserts.

This lesson ended, the Master, as Buddha, recited this stanza:—

When no attachment hampers heart or mind,
When righteousness is practiced peace to win,
He who so walks shall gain the victory,
And all the Fetters utterly destroy.

When he had thus led his teaching up to Arahatship as its crowning point, the Master went on to preach the Four Truths, at the close whereof that brother won Arahatship. Also the Master showed the connection and identified the Birth by saying, «Angulimala was the ogre of those days, and I myself Prince Five-Weapons.»

AN «EXAMPLE» OF THE EVILS OF RASHNESS

[This «example,» which points a warning against rash action, we give in three versions; partly for their intrinsic interest, and partly to show the surprising diversity in style and in details of treatment of what is essentially one *motif*. The first is from the Sanskrit of the ‹Hitopadeça,› an offshoot of the Panchatantra. The second is from E. B. Eastwick's translation of the Persian ‹Lights of Canopus.› If this is a «*simplified* recast of Nasr Allah's version,» what must that have been! The third is from G. L. Gomme's reprint (London, 1885) of the British Museum chap-book entitled ‹The Seven Wise Masters of Rome,› printed in 1520 by Wynkyn de Worde. The sources and imitations of this tale are given by Edouard Lancereau in his French translation of the ‹Panchatantra› (Paris, 1871), page 384. The story is the same as that told of Llewellyn the Great and his faithful hound Gellert, and familiar to English readers through the well-known ballad of William R. Spencer. The hound, which is the European representative of the plucky little Indian ichneumon, has become a martyr and a patron saint of little children in the popular belief of the South of France, and is invoked by mothers under the name of St. Guinefort.]

First Version

THE BRAHMAN AND HIS FAITHFUL ICHNEUMON

From the ‹Hitopadeça›

In Ujjain lived a brahman named Madhava, whose wife once left him in charge of their little child and went to bathe. Now an invitation came from the King for the brahman to perform a funeral oblation and partake of the funeral meal. At which news the poor fellow bethought himself: «If I go not quickly, then some one else will receive the funeral meal. For 'tis said:—

'Hast aught to give, or aught to take or do,
Give, take it, do it, quickly, ere the morrow rise;
Or else thy sloth full bitter shalt thou rue,
And ruthless Time shall suck the juice from thy emprise.'

But there is no one here to take care of the child. What then shall I do? Hold! I have here an ichneumon, which I have kept this long time and cared for as if he were my son: I will leave him to take care of the babe, and go." And so doing, he went.

Meantime there came near the child a black cobra; which when the ichneumon saw, he killed it and tore it in pieces. Then, with blood-smeared snout and paws, he ran to meet the brahman as he was returning home, and fawned at his feet. But the brahman, seeing the ichneumon in that plight, came rashly to the conclusion that the beast had eaten his child; and forthwith killed the ichneumon. Then when he came nigh and looked, behold, his child was asleep and the cobra slain. Then he saw that the ichneumon had done him a service, and sorrowfully recognizing the rashness of his deed, he was filled with despair.

Translation of Charles R. Lanman.

SECOND VERSION

THE RESULTS OF PRECIPITATION

From the 'Anvár-i Suhailí' or 'Lights of Canopus,' a Persian rendering of Pilpay

COUPLET

WHO dares to act without due thought and care,
Will sink at last in sorrow and despair.

And there are many anecdotes and innumerable stories apropos of this subject which are written and commemorated in the pages of nocturnal conversations and elegant annals, and among these is the story of the Holy Man who rashly stepped into the plain of precipitate action, and staining his hands with innocent blood, destroyed the unfortunate ichneumon; which displays the ill effects of this precipitation.

The King asked, "How was that?"

He said.

They have related that a Devotee after long celibacy desired to put in practice the injunction, "Matrimony is my commandment; therefore he who turns away from my commandment is none of mine." After extensive inquiry and infinite pains, the Devotee, through the aid of his lofty fortune and the help of his noble spirit, obtained a wife of a great family and an illustrious stock. The reflection of her countenance gave radiance to the morn, and the hue of her curling ringlets aided the perfumer of evening in intensifying his gloom. The azure sky had never beheld her equal, save in the mirror of the sun; and the swift-sighted limner of the imagination had ne'er looked on the like of her lovely semblance, save in the world of dreams.

VERSE

The glories of thy sunny cheek the world of beauty warmly kiss;
Like the full moon, thou hast arisen amid the sky of loveliness;
Thy countenance the brightest rose, thy form the fairest cypress is,
That ever grew in beauty's bower, or 'mid the flowers of comeliness.

And together with this beauty of form, she was adorned with excellence of disposition, and the graces of her body were set off by those of her mind. The Devotee, in his daily prayers, returned thanks for such a blessing; and having thus commenced his intercourse with that partner whose face resembled the beauties of Eden, he desired to beget a son. And no wise person bases his desire for children on mere sensual appetite, nor yields his body to the task save in quest of a virtuous son, who, in procuring the blessings asked for by prayer, is equivalent to the perpetual offering of alms.

And a son of fair visage and lovely form was born, such that the tokens of beauty and accomplishments bespoke his perfection, and the signs of admirable gifts shone and gleamed on the forehead of his condition. The Devotee beheld the morn of hope begin to smile from the dawning-place of desire, and the nightingale of his pleasure commenced singing on the rose-shrub of joy.

COUPLET

A fair gem from the boundless sea of Grace, was brought to light;
Upon the sky of Law divine a new star glittered bright.

The Devotee indulged in raptures at the beauty of his son, and fulfilled a variety of vows which he had made; and girding up his loins in attendance on his son's cradle night and day, drew through other matters the pen of oblivion, and expended all his energies in [promoting] his growth and strength, and grace and freshness and vigor.

COUPLET

How long shall I on thee bestow my breath like morn's young breeze,
That thou mayst blossom like a rose, to gladden and to please?

One day the mother of the child desiring to take a warm bath, committed him, with many injunctions, to the care of his father, who besides had nothing else then to do. Some time passed, and a confidential person, sent by the king of the country, came to request his attendance, and there was no possibility of delay. He was of necessity compelled to go out of the house. Now they had an ichneumon, in whose charge they left the house, and through him their minds were altogether set at ease; and he used to display the utmost exertion in ridding them of noxious reptiles, and beasts that bite or sting. The Devotee came out and left the ichneumon with his son. To be short, no sooner had he left the house than a large snake showed itself near the cradle. When the ichneumon saw that dart-like, armor-wearing snake,—that malignant creature swift to wrath, which when quiescent assumes the shape of a circle,—that arrowy-paced reptile, which at times, like a curved bow, joins its extremities,—

STANZA

Straight as a dart, anon, like buckler, round;
  Anon in noose-like circles flows its form;
No cloud *within*, two lightnings forked are found,
  No sea, but waves roll there—a mimic storm,—

making for the cradle, and intending to kill the child, it leapt up, and seizing his throat, imprisoned him in the ring of the noose of death; and by the blessed influence of its defense, the boy escaped from that whirlpool of destruction. Shortly after, the Devotee returned; and the ichneumon, smeared with blood, ran to meet him, in exultation at having done a good deed.

The Devotee imagined that it had killed his son, and that these stains were from his blood. The fire of wrath was kindled in the stove of his heart, and the smoke of precipitation entered the aperture of his brain; and his reason, through the murkiness of the fumes of rashness,—which, like the cloud of tyranny, is the cause of darkening the world,—covered its face with the veil of concealment. Before inquiring into the matter, or examining into the real state of the case, he smote down his staff on the ichneumon, and broke the vertebræ of its back, and knocked its head into the casket of its chest. But when he entered the house he beheld the child sleeping in safety in the cradle, and a huge serpent lying there torn in pieces. Then the smoke of remorse ascended from his heart, and he began to smite his breast with the stone of regret, and complaining and lamenting said:—

COUPLET

"Hereafter, I and grief are one; and every man this well must see,—
For me to have a cheerful heart, impossible and strange would be.

Alas! that the fire of this distressing accident cannot be extinguished by the water of excuses, and that the dart of the shame of this troublous transaction will not be repelled by the shield of extenuation. What unjust action is this that I have committed! and what unsuitable act is this that my hands have done!

COUPLET

'Tis right that I my blood should drink, in shame for this distress;
'Tis fit that I my life resign for this unhappiness.

Would to God that this son had never come into existence from nonentity, and that I had not set my love and affections upon him! so that this innocent blood would not have been shed on this account, and I should not have happened to embark in this unholy business. And what answer shall I give to my Creator for this, that I have causelessly destroyed one that dwelt in the same house with me; and have slain the guardian of my home, and the protector of my beloved son, without reason? And what excuse can I offer to my fellow-creatures for this? And hereafter the chain of censure will not be removed from my neck, and the writing of infamy will never be obliterated from the page of my affairs."

THIRD VERSION

THE EXAMPLE OF THE FIRST MASTER

From ‹The Seven Wise Masters of Rome›: Printed from the edition of Wynkyn de Worde, 1520, and edited, with an introduction, by George Laurence Gomme, F. S. A. London: printed for the Villon Society, 1885.

THERE was a valiant knight which had only one son as ye have. The which he loved so much that he ordained for his keeping three nurses: the first should give him suck and feed him, the second should wash him and keep him clean, the third should bring him to sleep and to rest. This knight had also a greyhound and a falcon that he also loved right well. The greyhound was so good that he never ran to no game but he took it and held it till his master came. And if his master disposed him to go to battle, if he should not speed in the battle, anon as he should mount upon his horse the greyhound would take the horse's tail in his mouth and draw backward, and would also cry and howl marvelously loud. By these signs the knight understood if that he should speed in his journey or not. The falcon was so gentle and so hardy that he was never cast off to his prey but he took it. This same knight had great pleasure in jousting and tourneying, so that upon a time under his castle he let proclaim a tournament to the which came many good lords and knights. The knight entered into the tourney, and his lady went with her maidens to see it. And as they went out, after went the nurses, and left the child lying alone in the cradle in the hall, where the greyhound lay nigh the wall, and the hawk or falcon standing upon a perch. In this hall there was a serpent lurking or hid in a hole, to all them of the castle unknown. The which when he felt that they were all absent, he put out his head of his hole. And as he no man saw, but the child lying in the cradle, he went out of his cavern towards the cradle for the child to have slain. The noble falcon seeing that, beheld the greyhound that was sleeping; she made such a noise and rustling with her wings or feathers that the greyhound awoke and rose up. And when he saw the serpent nigh the child, anon against him he leapt, and they both fought so long together till that the serpent had grievously hurted and wounded the greyhound that he bled sore, so that the earth about the cradle was all bebled with the blood of the greyhound. The greyhound, when that he felt himself so grievously hurted and wounded, started fiercely upon the serpent, and fought sore together and so eagerly, so that between them the cradle was overturned with the child. And because that the cradle had four pommels or feet, they saved the child's visage and his life from any hurtful falling towards the earth. And what shall I say more? Incontinent thereafter with great pain the greyhound overcame and slew the serpent, and went and laid him down again in his place and licked his wounds. And anon after, as the jousts and tourney was done, the nurses were the first that came into the castle. And as they saw the cradle reversed, with blood upon the earth environed, and that the greyhound was also bloody, they thought and said amongst themselves that the greyhound had slain the child, and they were not so wise as to turn up again the cradle with the child for to have seen what was thereof befallen. But they said, Let us flee or run away, lest that our master put or lay the blame upon us and slay us. And as they were thus away running, they met with the knight's wife, and she said to them, Wherefore make ye this sorrow, and whither will ye run? And they said, O lady, woe and sorrow be to us and to you. Why, what is there happened? show me. The greyhound, they said, that our lord and master loveth so much, hath devoured and slain your son, and lieth by the wall all full of the blood. As the lady this heard, she fell to the earth and began to weep and cry piteously; and said, Alas, O my dear son, be ye thus slain and dead? what shall I now make, that I have my only son thus lost?

Herewithal came in the knight from the tourney, and beholding his lady thus crying and making sorrow, he demanded her wherefore that she made so great sorrow and lamentation. She answered him, O my lord, your greyhound that ye love so much hath slain your only son, and lieth by the wall satiate with blood of the child. The knight hugely angered went in to the hall, and the greyhound went to him to meet and to fawn as he was wont to do. And the knight drew out his sword and with one stroke smote off the hound's head, and went to the cradle and found his son all whole, and by the cradle the serpent slain. And by divers signs perceived that the hound had fought against the serpent for the salvation of the child. Then with great sorrow and weeping he tare his hair and said, Woe be to me that for the words of my wife I have slain my good greyhound, the which hath saved my child's life and hath slain the serpent. Herefore I will put myself to penance. And brake his sword in three pieces, and went towards the Holy Land, and abode there all the days of his life.

Then said the Master to the Emperor, Lord, understand ye what I have said? And he answered and said, Right well. The Master said: If that ye do your son to death for the words of your wife, it shall come to you worse than it did to the knight for his greyhound. The Emperor said, Ye have showed me a fair example, and without doubt this day shall not my son die. Then said the Master, If ye do so, ye do wisely; but I thank you that ye have him spared this day for my sake.

THE LION-MAKERS

From the ‹Panchatantra,› Book v., No. 4

Even men of learning and noble birth are sometimes devoid of common-sense. For, true is the saying:—

Book-learning people rightly cherish;
  But gumption 's best of all to me.
Bereft of gumption you shall perish,
  Like to the Lion-makers three.

«How was that?» said the Man-with-the-wheel. And the Gold-magician narrated:—

In a certain place there dwelt four brahman youths in the greatest friendship. Three of them had got to the further shore of the ocean of science, but were devoid of common-sense; while the fourth had common-sense only, and no mind for science. Now once upon a time these friends took counsel together, and said, «Of what profit is science, if we cannot go with it to some foreign country and win the favor of princes and make our fortune? Therefore to the Eastern Country let us go.» And so it came to pass.

Now after they had gone a little way, the eldest spoke: «There is one among us, the fourth, who has no learning, but only common-sense; and a man can't get presents from kings by common-sense without learning. Not a whit will I give him of all that I gain; so let him go home.» And the second said, «Ho there, Gumption! get you homeward, for you have no learning!» But the third made answer, «Alas, it is not fitting so to do; for we have played together since we were boys. So let him come along too. He's a noble fellow, and shall have a share in the riches that we win."

On then they went together, till in a jungle they saw the bones of a dead lion. Then spoke the first: "Ha! now we can put our book-learning to the test. Here lies some sort of a dead creature: by the power of our learning we'll bring it to life. I'll put the bones together." And that then he did with zeal. The second added flesh, blood, and hide. But just as the third was breathing the breath of life into it, Gumption stopped him and said, "Hold: this is a lion that you are turning out. If you make him alive, he will kill every one of us." Thereupon made answer the other, "Fie, stupid! is learning to be fruitless in my hands?" "Well then," said Gumption, "just wait a bit till I climb a tree."

Thereupon the lion was brought to life. But the instant this was done, he sprang up and killed the three. Afterwards Gumption climbed down and went home.

Therefore, concluded the Gold-magician, therefore I say:—

Book-learning people rightly cherish;
 But gumption 's best of all to me.
Bereft of gumption you shall perish,
 Like to the Lion-makers three.

Translation of Charles R. Lanman.

THE KING AND THE HAWK

From the Persian version of Pilpay, 'Anvár-i Suhailí,' or 'Lights of Canopus'

They have related that in ancient times there was a king fond of hunting. He was ever giving reins to the courser of his desire in the pursuit of game, and was always casting the lasso of gladness over the neck of sport. Now this king had a hawk, who at a single flight could bring down the Símurgh from the peak of Káf, and in terror of whose claws the constellation Aquila kept himself close in the green nest of the sky.

VERSE

When that bold falcon stretched his pinions wide,
 Heaven's bosom then was piercèd through with dread;
When to the sky with upward flight he hied,
 The eagle of the spheres his feathers shed.

And the king had a prodigious fondness for this hawk, and always cared for it with his own hands. It happened that one day the monarch, holding the hawk on his hand, had gone to the chase. A stag leapt up before him, and he galloped after it with the utmost eagerness. But he did not succeed in coming up with it, and became separated from his retinue and servants; and though some of them followed him, the king rode so hotly that the morning breeze — which in the twinkling of the eye encircles the world — could not have reached the dust he raised, nor could the north wind, in spite of its velocity, attain to the dust of his horse's hoofs.

COUPLET

Unmeasured has thy swiftness been:
So swift, no trace of thee is seen!

Meantime the fire of his thirst was kindled, and the intense desire to drink overcame the king. He galloped his steed in every direction, and traversed the desert and the waste in search of water, until he reached the skirt of a mountain, and beheld that from its summit limpid water was trickling. The king drew forth a cup which he had in his quiver, and riding under the mountain filled the cup with that water, which fell drop by drop; and was about to take a draught, when the hawk made a blow with his wing and spilled all the water in the goblet. The king was vexed at that action, but held the cup a second time under the rock until it was brimful. He then raised it to his lips again, and again the hawk made a movement and overthrew the cup.

HEMISTICH

Brought to the lip, they then forbid the draught.

The king, rendered impatient by thirst, dashed the hawk on the ground and killed it. Shortly after, a stirrup-holder of the king came up, and saw the hawk dead and the king athirst. He then undid a water-vessel from his saddle-cord, and washed the cup clean, and was about to give the king to drink. The latter bade him ascend the mountain, as he had the strongest inclination for the pure water which trickled from the rock, and could not wait to collect it in the cup, drop by drop; and therefore he desired the attendant to fill a cup with it and come down. The stirrup-holder ascended the mountain and beheld a spring like the eye of hard-hearted misers, giving out a drop at a time with a hundred stintings; and a huge serpent lay dead on the margin of the fountain; and as the heat of the sun had taken effect upon it, the poisonous saliva mixed with the water of that mountain, and it trickled drop by drop down the rock. The stirrup-holder was overcome with horror, and came down from the mountain bewildered, and represented the state of the case, and gave the king a cup of cold water from his ewer. The latter raised the cup to his lips, and his eyes overflowed with tears.

COUPLET

A little water then he drank: the burnings of his heart were stopped;
The fluid that his lips imbibed, back from his flooding eyelids dropped.

The attendant asked the reason of his weeping. The king drew a cold sigh from his anguished heart, and said:—

COUPLET

"So deep my grief that I to none can tell the secret of my woes;
And yet my tale is such that I must still my lips perforce unclose."

He then related in full the story of the hawk and the spilling of the water in the cup; and said, "I grieve for the death of the hawk, and bemoan my own deed in that without inquiry I have deprived a creature so dear to me of life." The attendant replied, "This hawk protected thee from a great peril, and has established a claim to the gratitude of all the people of this country. It would have been better if the king had not been precipitate in slaying it, and had quenched the fire of wrath with the water of mildness, and had turned back the reins of the courser of his passions with the vigor of endurance, and had not transgressed the monition of the wise, who have said:—

COUPLET

Do not the courser of thyself so strain,
That thou canst not at will draw in the rein."

The king replied, "I repent of this unseemly action, but my repentance is now unavailing, and the wound of this sorrow cannot be healed by any salve; and as long as I live I shall retain on my bosom the scar of this regret, and lacerate the visage of my feelings with the nail of remorse.

HEMISTICH

What can I do? The deed was mine: for self-made ills there is no
cure.»

THE ASS IN THE LION'S SKIN

From the ‹Jataka›: translated by Henry Clarke Warren, in his ‹Buddhism in Translations,› Vol. iii. of the Harvard Oriental Series

«NAY, this is not a lion's roar.» — This also was related by the Teacher concerning Kokalika; and it was while dwelling in Jetavana monastery. Kokalika, at the time, was desirous of intoning a doctrinal recitation before the congregation of the priests. When the Teacher heard this, he related the following tale:—

ONCE upon a time, when Brahmadatta was reigning at Benares, the Future Buddha, having been born in a farmer's family and now come of age, was making his living by husbandry. Now at that time a certain peddler went about selling his wares, which he carried on the back of an ass. And at every place he came to he would unload the ass, and dressing him up in the skin of a lion, let him loose in some field of rice or barley. And the field-watchers did not dare approach, as they thought it was a lion. Now one day the peddler took up his abode at the gate of a village, and while his breakfast was cooking, he dressed up the ass in the lion's skin and let him loose in a field of barley. The field-watchers did not dare approach, as they thought it was a lion, but went home and announced the news. Then all the inhabitants of the village took up arms, and, blowing conch-shells and beating drums, went to the field and shouted, so that the ass became afraid for his life and brayed. Then the Future Buddha knew it was an ass, and pronounced the first stanza:—

«Nay, this is not a lion's roar,
Nor tiger, panther, gives it vent;
But, dressed up in a lion's skin,
It is a wretched ass that brays.»

And also the inhabitants of the village knew it was an ass, and beat him until his bones broke, and took the lion's skin away with them. Then came the peddler, and seeing that his ass had come to grief, he pronounced the second stanza:—

> «Long might the ass have lived to eat
> The green and tender barley grain,
> Accoutred in the lion's skin,
> But that he brayed, and ruined all.»

And while he was thus speaking, the ass died; whereupon the peddler left him and went his way.

The Teacher, having given this doctrinal instruction, identified the characters in the Birth-story:—«At that time the ass was Kokalika, but the wise farmer was I myself.»

THE HARE-MARK IN THE MOON

From the ‹Jataka›: translated by Henry Clarke Warren, in his ‹Buddhism in Translations,› Vol. iii. of the Harvard Oriental Series

«SOME red-fish have I, seven in all.»—This was related by the Teacher while dwelling in Jetavana monastery; and it was concerning a donation of all the requisites to the congregation of the priests.

It seems that a householder of Savatthi prepared a donation of all the requisites for the Buddha and for the Order. At the door of his house he had a pavilion built and gotten ready; and having invited the Buddha and the congregation of the priests, he made them sit down on costly seats which had been spread for them in the pavilion, and gave them an excellent repast of savory dishes. Then he invited them again for the next day, and again for the next, until he had invited them seven times. And on the seventh day he made the donation of all the requisites to the Buddha and to five hundred priests.

At the end of the breakfast the Teacher returned thanks and said:—

«Layman, it is fitting that you thus manifest a hearty zeal; for this almsgiving was also the custom of the wise of old time. For the wise of old time surrendered their own lives to chance suppliants, and gave their own flesh to be eaten.»

Then, at the request of the householder, he related the bygone occurrence:—

ONCE upon a time, when Brahmadatta was ruling at Benares, the Future Buddha was born as a hare, and dwelt in a wood.

Now on one side of this wood was a mountain, on another a river, and on another a border village. And there were three other animals that were his comrades,—a monkey, a jackal, and an otter. These four wise creatures dwelt together, catching their prey each in his own hunting-ground, and at night resorting together. And the wise hare would exhort the other three and teach them the Doctrine, saying, «Give alms, keep the precepts, and observe fast-days.» Then the three would approve of his admonition, and go each to his own lair in the thicket, and spend the night.

Time was going by in this manner, when one day the Future Buddha looked up into the sky and saw the moon, and perceived that the next day would be fast-day. Then said he to the others:

«To-morrow is fast-day. Do you three keep the precepts and observe the day; and as alms given while keeping the precepts bring great reward, if any suppliants present themselves give them to eat of your own food.»

«Very well,» said they, and passed the night in their lairs.

On the next day the otter started out early, and went to the banks of the Ganges to hunt for prey. Now a fisherman had caught seven red-fish and strung them on a vine, and buried them in the sand on the banks of the Ganges, and had then gone on down-stream catching fish as he went. The otter smelt the fishy odor, and scraping away the sand, perceived the fish and drew them out. Then he called out three times, «Does any one own these?» and when he saw no owner, he bit hold of the vine with his teeth, and drew them to his lair in the thicket. There he lay down, remembering that he was keeping the precepts, and thinking, «I will eat these at the proper time.»

And the jackal also went out to hunt for prey, and found in the hut of a field-watcher two spits of meat, and one iguana, and a jar of sour cream. Then he called out three times, «Does any one own these?» and when he saw no owner, he placed the cord that served as a handle for the jar of sour cream about his neck, took hold of the spits of meat and of the iguana with his teeth, and brought them home, and placed them in his lair in the thicket. Then he lay down, remembering that he was keeping the precepts, and thinking, «I will eat these at the proper time.»

And the monkey also, entering the forest, fetched home a bunch of mangoes, and placed them in his lair in the thicket.

Then he lay down, remembering that he was keeping the precepts, and thinking, «I will eat these at the proper time.»

The Future Buddha, however, remained in his thicket, thinking, «At the proper time I will go out and eat dabba-grass.» Then he thought, «If any suppliants come, they will not want to eat grass, and I have no sesamum, rice, or other such food. If any suppliant comes, I will give him of my own flesh.»

Such fieriness of zeal in keeping the precepts caused the marble throne of Sakka to grow hot. Then, looking carefully, Sakka discovered the cause, and proposed to himself to try the hare. And disguised as a brahman, he went first to the lair of the otter.

«Brahman, why stand you there?» said the otter.

Said he, «Pandit, if I could but get something to eat, I would keep fast-day vows, and perform the duties of a monk.»

«Very well,» said the otter: «I will give you some food.» And he addressed him with the first stanza:—

«Some red-fish have I, seven in all,
Found stranded on the river bank.
All these, O brahman, are my own:
Come eat, and dwell within this wood.»

«I will return a little later,» said the brahman; «let the matter rest until to-morrow.»

Then he went to the jackal. And the latter also asking, «Why stand you there?» the brahman answered the same as before.

«Very well,» said the jackal: «I will give you some food.» And he addressed him with the second stanza:—

«A watchman guards the field close by,—
His supper have I ta'en away:
Two spits of meat, iguana one,
One dish of butter clarified.
All these, O brahman, are my own:
Come eat, and dwell within this wood.»

«I will return a little later,» said the brahman; «let the matter rest until to-morrow.»

Then he went to the monkey. And the latter also asking, «Why stand you there?» the brahman answered the same as before.

«Very well,» said the monkey: «I will give you some food.» And he addressed him with the third stanza:—

«Ripe mangoes, water clear and cold,
And cool and pleasant woodland shade,—
All these, O brahman, are my own:
Come eat, and dwell within this wood.»

«I will return a little later,» said the brahman: «let the matter rest until to-morrow.»

Then he went to the wise hare. And he also asking, «Why stand you there?» the brahman answered the same as before.

The Future Buddha was delighted. «Brahman,» said he, «you have done well in coming to me for food. To-day I will give alms such as I never gave before; and you will not have broken the precepts by destroying life. Go, my friend, and gather wood, and when you have made a bed of coals, come and tell me. I will sacrifice my life by jumping into the bed of live coals. And as soon as my body is cooked, do you eat of my flesh, and perform the duties of a monk.» And he addressed him with the fourth stanza:—

«The hare no seed of sesamum
Doth own, nor beans, nor winnowed rice.
But soon my flesh this fire shall roast:
Then eat, and dwell within this wood.»

When Sakka heard this speech, he made a heap of live coals by his superhuman power, and came and told the Future Buddha. The latter rose from his couch of dabba-grass, and went to the spot. And saying, «If there are any insects in my fur, I must not let them die,» he shook himself three times. Then throwing his whole body into the jaws of his liberality, he jumped into the bed of coals, as delighted in mind as a royal flamingo when he alights in a cluster of lotuses. The fire, however, was unable to make hot so much as a hair-pore of the Future Buddha's body. He felt as if he had entered the abode of cold above the clouds.

Then, addressing Sakka, he said:—

«Brahman, the fire you have made is exceeding cold, and is not able to make hot so much as a hair-pore of my body. What does it mean?»

«Pandit, I am no brahman: I am Sakka, come to try you.»

«Sakka, your efforts are useless; for if all beings who dwell in the world were to try me in respect of my liberality, they would not discover in me any unwillingness to give.» Thus the Future Buddha thundered.

«Wise hare,» said then Sakka, «let your virtue be proclaimed to the end of this world-cycle.» And taking a mountain, he squeezed it, and with the juice drew the outline of a hare in the disk of the moon. Then in that wood, and in that thicket, he placed the Future Buddha on some tender dabba-grass, and taking leave of him, departed to his own celestial abode.

And these four wise creatures lived happily and harmoniously, and kept the precepts, and observed fast-days, and passed away according to their deeds.

When the Teacher had given this instruction, he expounded the truths, and identified the characters of the Birth-story (at the close of the exposition of the truths, the householder who had given all the requisites became established in the fruit of conversion):—

«In that existence the otter was Ananda, the jackal was Moggallana, the monkey was Sariputta, while the wise hare was I myself.»

COUNT NOT YOUR CHICKENS BEFORE THEY BE HATCHED

From the ‹Panchatantra,› Book v., Fable 9

[This is the well-known tale of the ‹Milkmaid who poised a full pail on her head,› La Fontaine's ‹Perrette› (vii. 10). It recurs in the ‹Arabian Nights› (Night 716), and often elsewhere.*]

Once upon a time there lived in a certain town a brahman named Luckless. He begged a lot of barley grits; and with what he had left over from his dinner, he filled a jar. This he hung on a low peg in the wall, put his cot beneath it, and looking at it with unaverted gaze, he bethought him:—«This pot is full of barley grits, and if there comes a famine, will fetch me a hundred pieces of silver. With them I shall buy me a couple of she-goats; and as they will drop kids every six months, I shall soon have a herd from them. For the goats I shall get many cows; for the cows, buffalo-cows; and for them, mares; and when they have foaled, I shall have many horses; and from the sale of them, much gold. With the gold I'll get a house with four rooms, about a court. And then some brahman will come to my house, and give me his lovely daughter, with a rich dowry in marriage.

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* See the mutations of this tale in the selection from Max Müller, in the present work.

«She will bear me a son, and I'll name him Soma-çarman. When he's old enough for me to trot him on my knee, I'll take a book, and sitting out behind the stable, I'll study it. Then Soma-çarman, seeing me, and eager to be trotted on my knee, will leave his mother's lap, and in coming to me will get right near the horses' hoofs. And I, full of anger, shall say to my wife, 'Take the child, quick!' She, busy with housework, won't hear me, and I shall get up and give her a kick.»

Deep sunk in thought, he gave such a kick that he broke the jar, and the grits ran down over him till he was well whitened.

Translation of Charles R. Lanman.

THE TRANSFORMED MOUSE

From the 'Panchatantra,' Book iii., Fable 12

On the bank of the Ganges, whose billows are flecked with white foam made by the fish that dart in terror at the roar of the waters breaking on its craggy shores, there is a hermitage filled with ascetics. They are given over to prayer, restraint of the senses, asceticism, study of holy writ, fasting, and meditation. They take very pure and very little water. They mortify the flesh by a diet of bulbs, roots, fruits, and water-plants. They wear only an apron of bast.

There was one among them named Yajnavalkya. He had performed his sacred ablutions in the Ganges, and was about to rinse his mouth, when into his hand there fell from the beak of a hawk a little mouse. On seeing it, he put it on a banyan-leaf, bathed again and rinsed his mouth, performed rites of expiation and so forth; and then by the power of his asceticism he changed the mouse into a girl, took her with him to his hermitage, and said to his wife, who was childless, «My dear, take this girl as your daughter, and bring her up carefully.»

So the wife reared her, and loved her, and cared for her, till she was twelve years old; and then, seeing the girl was fit to be married, she said to her husband, «Seest thou not, O husband, that the time for our daughter's marriage is slipping by?» «Quite right,» said he: «so if she is agreed, I will summon the exalted sun-god, and give her to him to wife.» «What's the harm?» said his wife: «do so.»

So the sage called the sun. And such was the power of his summons, which was made up of words of the Scripture, that the sun came instantly, saying, «Reverend sir, didst thou call me?» He answered, «Here is my daughter. If she will but choose thee, then take her to wife.» And to his daughter he spake, «My child, does the exalted sun, the illumer of the three worlds, please thee?» The girl said, «Father, he is too scorching. I like him not. Call me some one more eminent than he.» Then said the hermit to the sun, «Exalted one, is there any one mightier than thou?» And the sun said, «There is one mightier than I,—the cloud; for he covers me, and then none can see me.»

So the sage called the cloud, and said, «Daughter, to him do I give thee.» «He is too dark and cold,» answered she; «so give me to some other mightier being.» Then the sage asked the cloud, «O cloud, is there any mightier even than thou?» «The wind is mightier than I,» said the cloud: «when the wind strikes me I am torn to a thousand shreds.»

So the sage called the wind and said, «Daughter, does the wind please thee best for a husband?»—«Father, he is too fickle. Bring hither some one mightier even than he.» And the sage said, «O wind, is any mightier than thou?» And the wind made answer, «The mountain is mightier than I; for strong as I am, it braces itself and withstands me.»

So the sage called the mountain and said, «Daughter, to him do I give thee.» She answered and spake, «Father, he is too hard and unyielding. Give me to some other than him.» So the sage asked the mountain, «O king of mountains, is there any mightier even than thou?» And the mountain said, «The mice are mightier than I; for they tear and rend my body asunder.»

So the sage called a mouse, and showed him to her, and said, «Daughter, to him do I give thee. Does the king of the mice please thee?»

And she, showing her joy at the thought that this one at last was of her own kind, said, «Father, make me a mouse again, and give me to him, in order that I may fulfill my household duties after the manner ordained for my kind.» So by the power of his asceticism he made her a mouse again, and gave her to him.

Translation of Charles R. Lanman.

THE GREEDY JACKAL

From the ‹Panchatantra,› Book ii., Fable 3

THE brahman said:—

Excessive greed should ne'er be cherished.
Have greed—but keep it moderate.
The all too greedy jackal perished,
A wooden top-knot on his pate.

«How was that?» asked the brahman woman. And the brahman narrated.

IN a certain forest lived a savage tribesman, who, on a day, set out a-hunting. And as he went he met a mighty boar, as big as the peak of Mount Anjana. Straightway, drawing his bow till the string touched his ear, he let fly a keen arrow and hit the boar. Full of rage, the boar, with his sharp tusk that gleamed like the young moon's crescent, ripped up the belly of the hunter, that he fell lifeless to earth. But the boar too yielded his life, from the smarting wound of the arrow.

Meantime a jackal, for whom Fate had ordained a speedy death, roaming for hunger hither and yon, came to the spot. Delighted at the sight of the boar and the hunter, he bethought him: «Ah! Fate is kind to me in giving me this unexpected food. How true is the saying:—

No finger need'st thou raise! may'st work or sleep!
But of thy deeds wrought in a former birth,
The fruit—or good or ill—thou needs must reap!
Inexorable Karma rules the earth.

And again—

In whatso time of life, or when, or where,
In former birth thou didst or good or ill,
In just that time of life, and then, and there,
In future birth, of fruit shalt have thy fill!

Now I'll manage it so with these carcasses that I shall get a living off of them for many days. And to begin withal, I'll eat the sinew which forms the bowstring. For they say —

> A wise man doth sip the elixir of life,
> Circumspectly and slowly, and heedful.
> Thus enjoy thou the riches thou'st won by thy strife:
> Never take at one time more than needful.»

Making up his mind in this way, he took the end of the bow in his mouth, and began to gnaw the sinew. But as soon as his teeth cut through the string, the bow tore through his palate, and came out of his head like a top-knot, and he gave up the ghost. Therefore, continued the brahman, therefore I say: —

> Excessive greed should ne'er be cherished.
> Have greed — but keep it moderate.
> The all too greedy jackal perished,
> A wooden top-knot on his pate.

Translation of Charles R. Lanman.

«HOW PLAUSIBLE»

From the ‹Jataka,› No. 89

This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a knave. The details of his knavery will be related in the Uddala-jataka.

Once on a time when Brahmadatta was reigning in Benares, there lived hard by a certain little village a shifty rascal of an ascetic, of the class which wears long matted hair. The squire of the place had a hermitage built in the forest for him to dwell in, and used to provide excellent fare for him in his own house. Taking the matted-haired rascal to be a model of goodness, and living as he did in fear of robbers, the squire brought a hundred pieces of gold to the hermitage, and there buried them, bidding the ascetic keep watch over them. — «No need to say that, sir, to a man who has renounced the world; we hermits never covet other folks' goods.» — «It is well, sir,» said the squire, who went off with full confidence in the other's protestations. Then the rascally ascetic thought to himself, «There's enough here to keep a man all his life long.» Allowing a few days to elapse first, he removed the gold and buried it by the wayside, returning to dwell as before in his hermitage. Next day, after a meal of rice at the squire's house, the ascetic said, «It is now a long time, sir, since I began to be supported by you; and to live long in one place is like living in the world,—which is forbidden to professed ascetics. Wherefore I must needs depart.» And though the squire pressed him to stay, nothing could overcome this determination.

«Well then, if it must be so, go your way, sir,» said the squire; and he escorted the ascetic to the outskirts before he left him. After going a little way, the ascetic thought that it would be a good thing to cajole the squire; so putting a straw in his matted hair, back he turned again. «What brings you back?» asked the squire. «A straw from your roof, sir, had stuck in my hair; and as we hermits may not take anything which is not bestowed upon us, I have brought it back to you.» «Throw it down, sir, and go your way,» said the squire, who thought to himself, «Why, he won't take so much as a straw which does not belong to him! What a sensitive nature!» Highly delighted with the ascetic, the squire bade him farewell.

Now at that time it chanced that the Future Buddha, who was on his way to the border district for trading purposes, had halted for the night at that village. Hearing what the ascetic said, the suspicion was aroused in his mind that the rascally ascetic must have robbed the squire of something; and he asked the latter whether he had deposited anything in the ascetic's care.

«Yes: a hundred pieces of gold.»

«Well, just go and see if it's all safe.»

Away went the squire to the hermitage, and looked, and found his money gone. Running back to the Future Buddha, he cried, «It's not there.» «The thief is none other than that long-haired rascal of an ascetic,» said the Future Buddha: «let us pursue and catch him.» So away they hastened in hot pursuit. When they caught the rascal, they kicked and cuffed him till he discovered to them where he had hidden the money. When he procured the gold, the Future Buddha, looking at it, scornfully remarked to the ascetic, «So a hundred pieces of gold didn't trouble your conscience so much as that straw!» And he rebuked him in this stanza:—

«How plausible the story that the rascal told!
How heedful of the straw! How heedless of the gold!»

When the Future Buddha had rebuked the fellow in this wise, he added: «And now take care, you hypocrite, that you don't play such a trick again.»

When his life ended, the Future Buddha passed away, to fare thereafter according to his deserts.

His lesson ended, the Master said, «Thus you see, brethren, that this brother was as knavish in the past as he is to-day.» And he identified the Birth by saying:—«This knavish brother was the knavish ascetic of those days, and I the wise and good man.»

THE MAN IN THE PIT

From the ‹Maha-Bharata›

[This is one of the most famous parables of antiquity and the Middle Ages, and has served alike for the edification of Brahmans, Jains, Buddhists, Mohammedans, Jews, and Christians. The text of this passage of the ‹Maha-Bharata› (Book xi., Sections 5, 6) is corrupt, and the version therefore free. The history of the parable forms the subject of a charming essay by Ernst Kuhn, in ‹Festgruss an Otto von Böhtlingk› (Stuttgart, 1888).]

THE PARABLE

A CERTAIN brahman, it is said, once came into a vast and impassable jungle filled with beasts of prey, and so beset on every hand with horribly roaring lions, tigers, and elephants that even the God of Death would quake at the sight. The brahman's heart was sore affrighted, and his hair stood on end. He ran hither and yonder, searching in every quarter for some place of refuge, but in vain. And as he ran, he saw that the horrible jungle was encompassed with a net which was held by a woman of most horrible aspect.

Now in the midst of the jungle was an overgrown pit, whose mouth was covered with creepers and tough grasses. The brahman fell into this hidden well, but caught himself in the tangled creepers and hung there, feet upwards, head downwards.

Meantime new troubles came upon him: for within the pit he beheld a huge and mighty serpent; and hard by the mouth of it, an enormous black elephant with six faces and twelve feet, gradually approaching. Many terrible bees swarmed about the branches of the tree that stood over the pit, eager for the honey which continually dripped down from the twigs.

The man, in spite of his dreadful strait as he hung in the pit, sipped the honey as it dripped: but as he sipped, his thirst did not abate; and ever insatiate, he longed for more and more. Mice, some white and some black, gnawed the roots of the plants on which he held fast. There was danger from the beasts, from the horrible woman, from the serpent at the bottom, and from the elephant at the mouth of the pit; danger from the mice and from the giving way of the plants; and danger from the bees.

Yet even so, he let not go his hope and wish for life.

The Interpretation of the Parable

The impassable jungle is life. The beasts are diseases. The monstrous woman is old age, that robs us of youth and beauty. The pit is our mortal body. The mighty serpent within it is time (or death), the ender of all creatures. The creeper on whose tendrils the man hangs in the pit is the hope of life. The elephant is the year: his six faces are the six seasons, and his twelve feet are the twelve months. And the white and black mice that are gnawing away the roots of the plant are the days and nights. The bees are the desires; and the honey, the pleasures of sense.

PINDAR

(522-450? B. C.)

BY BASIL L. GILDERSLEEVE

PINDAR, greatest of Greek lyric poets, was born at Thebes of Bœotia, in 522 B. C. He came of a noble family, and the aristocratic note sounds clear and shrill throughout his poems. The family was not only noble,—it was artistic, it was musical. The flute, or rather clarionet, was a favorite Bœotian instrument; and Pindar served an apprenticeship as a flute-player, as a musical composer. Sundry stories are told of his early career: how he was defeated by Corinna, whose fair face and sweet Bœotian brogue won her the victory; and how the same Corinna warned him against overcrowding his poems with mythological figures, summing up her advice in the homely proverb, «Sow with the hand and not with the whole sack.» The period of apprenticeship past, he began to compose poems for public occasions; and the fragments show that he became a master in all the ranges of lyric poetry,—in hymns, in pæans, in songs for the dance, in processional songs, choruses for virgins, songs of praise, drinking songs, dithyrambs, dirges,—maintaining everywhere his eminence, and striking at times notes that are more sympathetic to the modern soul than his great Songs of Victory. The oldest poem that we have of his, the tenth Pythian,—composed, according to the common computation, when he was only twenty years old, in honor of a Thessalian victor,—shows little trace of a 'prentice hand. From this time forth his fame grew, and his commissions came from every part of Greece; and as was the wont of lyric poets, he traveled far and wide in the exercise of his art, the peer of Thessalian nobles and Sicilian princes. Honored wherever he went, he was reverenced at home; for he was a poet-priest, and the Blessed Ones are said to have manifested themselves to him. When he craved of a god what was best for man, the god sent him death, as he lay resting on the lap

PINDAR

of his favorite in the theatre at Argos. He cannot have long outlived his seventieth year.

Pindar was a proud, self-contained man, and held himself aloof from meaner things; and this pride in his lineage and in his art, this belief in the claims of long descent, and in the supreme perfection of his own consecrated song, may be the reason why the modern heart does not respond to Pindar as it does to other Greek poets—as it does to his rival Simonides, and to his contemporary Æschylus. Simonides is more tender; and Æschylus in his ‹Persians› and his ‹Seven against Thebes› strikes a warlike note of patriotism, that thrilled the Athenian theatre then and thrills us now. But Æschylus was a Marathon man; and Pindar was bound by his people and by his order to the cause of Thebes, which was the cause of the invader. But the issue of the Persian war interpreted to Pindar the meaning of the struggle; and his praise of Athens—«the violet-wreathed,» «the stay of Hellas»—was a chaplet that the Athenians wore proudly. The Thebans are said to have fined him heavily for the praise of their enemy, but Athens more than made good the loss; and long afterwards, when the Macedonian soldiery pillaged Thebes, Alexander, grateful for a like honor which Pindar had done to an ancestor of his,

«—— bid spare
The house of Pindarus when temple and tower
Went to the ground.»

Pindar is known to us chiefly by his Songs of Victory, composed in honor of the victors in the great games of Greece. The preservation of these poems is attributed to the accident of their position in the Alexandrian collection; but one cannot suppress the feeling that it was not accident alone that has preserved for us these characteristic specimens of an unreturning past. For nothing can bring these games back. The semblance may be there, but the spirit is gone forever. The origin of the games was religious, and they were held in honor of the great divinities of Greece,—the Olympian and Nemean in honor of Zeus, the Pythian of Apollo, the Isthmian of Poseidon. The praise of the gods is often the burden of the Song of Victory. The times of the games were fixed by a sacred calendar; and the prizes were simply consecrated wreaths of wild olive, laurel, and wild celery. True, abundant honors and many privileges awaited the victor at his home. The blessing of the gods rested on him; he was a man of mark everywhere in Greece; and sunshine lay thenceforth about his life. Surely reward enough for the «toil and expense,» the «expense and toil,» which Pindar emphasizes so much. Much stress is laid, and justly laid, on the athletic features of the games,—on the truly Greek consecration of the body, in its naked perfection, to the service of the deity. But there was a service of the substance as well; and the odes are so arranged as to bring the most expensive, the most princely, to the front. Only one of the odes here selected deals with physical prowess.

The theme is no narrow theme, as it is handled by Pindar. The shining forms of gods and heroes illumine the Songs of Victory; every ode reaches back into the mythic past, and brings out of that treasury some tale of endurance or achievement, some romantic adventure, some story of love, some vision of the world beyond. Again, the poet dominates the whole by his strong personality, by his belief in God, by his belief in genius as the gift of God. He has a priestly authority; he is not the mouthpiece of the people, he is in a sense the voice of the Most High. Still, the Song of Victory does not belie its name. The note of triumph rings through festal joy and solemn prayer and grave counsel: «Only, the temporary victory is lifted to the high level of the eternal prevalence of the beautiful and the good over the foul and the base; the victor himself is transfigured into a glorious personification of his race, and the present is reflected, magnified, illumined, in the mirror of the mythic past.» This higher point of view gives a wider sweep of vision; and in Pindar's odes the light of a common ideal played over all the habitations of the Hellenes. Proof of pure Hellenic blood was required of all contestants at the great games. In Pindar's Songs of Victory the blood is transmuted into spirit.

For the appreciation of the lofty and brilliant genius of Pindar, the closest study is necessary; and comparatively few of those who profess and call themselves Grecians are Pindaric scholars. And yet much of his «gorgeous eloquence,» as Sir Philip Sidney calls it, lies open to the day,—the splendor of his diction, the vividness of his imagery. Even in a translation all is not lost. Matthew Arnold calls Pindar «the poet on whom above all other poets the power of style seems to have exercised an inspiring and intoxicating effect»; and style cannot be transferred entire. No rendering can give the form and hue of the Greek words, or the varied rhythm, now stately, now impassioned, as the «Theban eagle» now soars, now swoops. But no one can read Pindar, even in a translation, without recognizing the work of a supreme genius, who combined, as no other Greek poet combined, opulence and elevation with swiftness and strength. To take the odes selected here: The first Olympian is said to have owed its position to the story which it tells of the primal chariot race in Elis; but it holds its place by its brilliance. The second Olympian strikes a note the world is to hear ages afterwards in the ‹Divina Commedia› of Dante. In the third Olympian the sustained diction matches the deep moral significance of the life of Herakles; the seventh is as resplendent as the Island of the Rose which it celebrates, the Bride of the Sun; and the majestic harmonies of the first Pythian sway the soul to-day as they did when the Doric lyre was not a figure of speech. Pindar's noble compounds and his bold metaphors give splendor and vitality to his style; his narrative has a swift and strong movement; and his moral lessons are couched in words of oracular impressiveness. All this needs no demonstration; and so far as details go, Pindar appeals to every lover of poetry.

And yet, as he himself has said, his song needs interpreters. His transitions are bold, and it is hard to follow his flight. Hence he has been set down as lawless; and modern «Pindarists» have considered themselves free from the laws of consecutive thought and the shackles of metrical symmetry. But whatever the freedom of Pindar's thought, his odes are built on the strictest principles of metrical form; strophe is answered by antistrophe, epode responds to epode, bar to bar. The more one studies the metres, the more one marvels at the delicate and precise workmanship. But when one turns to the thought, the story, then the symmetry becomes less evident — and yet it is there. Only, the correspondence of contents to form is not mechanically close. The most common type of the Song of Victory is that which begins with the praise of the victor, passes over to the myth, and returns to the victor. But victor, myth, victor, is not the uniform order. The poet refuses to be bound by a mechanical law, and he shifts the elements at his sovereign pleasure. The first Pythian is not built like the first Olympian. This myth, this story, which is found in almost every Pindaric ode, is not a mere poetical digression, not a mere adornment of the poem. It grows out of the theme. So in the first Olympian the kingly person of Hieron and the scene of the victory suggest the achievement of the first master of the great island of Pelops. In the third, the heroic figure of Theron brings up the heroic figure of Herakles, and the reward of the victory suggests the Quest of the Olive. The seventh Olympian, recording a splendid career, gives it a fit setting in the story of the victor's home, the Island of the Rose. And in the first Pythian the crushed son of Gaia, who answers to the suppressed spirit of discord, lay under the very Ætna whose lord is celebrated in the poem. The historical interpretation has been overdone; and it is a mistake to press the lines of coincidence between the figures of the myth and the figures of the victor and his house: but it is also a mistake to revert to the older view, and deny all vital connection between the mythical past and the actual present.

This controversy as to the function of the myth is but a specimen of what is found in every sphere of Pindaric study. Few of Pindar's interpreters have heeded the words of the poet himself, «Measure is best.» Ancient schemes of lyric composition have been thrust on the fair body of the Pindaric odes, in utter disregard of the symmetry of the members; and elaborate theories have been based on the position of recurrent words. There has been much insistence on the golden texts and the central truths; but unfortunately each commentator picks out his own texts and finds his own centre. «No true art without consciousness,» says one, after Plato. «No true art without unconsciousness,» says another, after Hartmann. And the lover of Pindar, weary of all this dispute, recalls the solemn verse, as true in art as in religion, «No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him.» In art as in religion, there is no true acceptance without a «drawing» that defies analysis.

Bibliography.—The best book on Pindar and his art is by Alfred Croiset, ‹Pindare et les Lois du Lyrisme Grec› (second edition, Paris, 1886). There is an admirable chapter on Pindar in Jebb's ‹Classical Greek Poets› (1893), and an elaborate and most suggestive work by Fraccaroli, ‹Le Odi di Pindaro› (1894).

The translations of the odes that have been selected for this ‹Library› are taken without change from the admirable version of Ernest Myers, who has kindly given his consent to the reproduction. One exception is made, and that in favor of Professor Newcomer's version of the first Pythian, which is published here for the first time, and will be welcomed by all lovers of poetry and the poet, as the earnest of a sympathetic rendering of Pindar's Odes of Victory. That an editor of Pindar should differ at a number of points from any other man's translation is most natural; but it would be both impertinent and ungrateful to insist on divergences of opinion here. A work of art such as Myers's translation is to be changed by the hand of the artist himself or not at all.

B. L. Gildersleeve

FIRST OLYMPIAN ODE

For Hieron of Syracuse, Winner in the Horse Race

[Hieron won this race in B. C. 476, while at the height of his power at Syracuse.]

Best is Water of all; and Gold, as a flaming fire in the night, shineth eminent amid lordly wealth: but if of prizes in the games thou art fain, O my soul, to tell, then, as for no bright star more quickening than the sun, must thou search in the void firmament by day, so neither shall we find any games greater than the Olympic whereof to utter our voice; for hence cometh the glorious hymn, and entereth into the minds of the skilled in song, so that they celebrate the son of Kronos, when to the rich and happy hearth of Hieron they are come; for he wieldeth the sceptre of justice in Sicily of many flocks, culling the choice fruits of all kinds of excellence; and with the flower of music is he made splendid, even such strains as we sing blithely at the table of a friend.

Take from the peg the Dorian lute, if in any wise the glory of Pherenikos at Pisa hath swayed thy soul unto glad thoughts, when by the banks of Alpheos he ran, and gave his body ungoaded in the course, and brought victory to his master, the Syracusans' king, who delighteth in horses.

Bright is his fame in Lydian Pelops's colony, inhabited of a goodly race, whose founder mighty earth-enfolding Poseidon loved, what time from the vessel of purifying, Klotho took him with the bright ivory furnishment of his shoulder.

Verily many things are wondrous, and haply tales decked out with cunning fables beyond the truth make false men's speech concerning them. For Charis, who maketh all sweet things for mortal men, by lending honor unto such, maketh oft the unbelievable thing to be believed; but the days that follow after are the wisest witnesses.

Meet is it for a man that concerning gods he speak honorably; for the reproach is less. Of thee, son of Tantalos, I will speak contrariwise to them who have gone before me, and I will tell how when thy father had bidden thee to that most seemly feast at his beloved Sipylos, repaying to the gods their banquet, then did he of the bright Trident, his heart vanquished by love, snatch thee and bear thee behind his golden steeds to the house of august Zeus in the highest, whither again on a like errand came Ganymede in the after time.

But when thou hadst vanished, and the men who sought thee long brought thee not to thy mother, some one of the envious neighbors said secretly that over water heated to boiling, they had hewn asunder with a knife thy limbs, and at the tables had shared among them, and eaten, sodden fragments of thy flesh. But to me it is impossible to call one of the blessed gods cannibal; I keep aloof: in telling ill tales is often little gain.

Now if any man ever had honor of the guardians of Olympus, Tantalos was that man; but his high fortune he could not digest, and by excess thereof won him an overwhelming woe, in that the Father hath hung above him a mighty stone that he would fain ward from his head, and therewithal he is fallen from joy.

This hopeless life of endless misery he endureth with other three, for that he stole from the immortals, and gave to his fellows at a feast, the nectar and ambrosia whereby the gods had made him incorruptible. But if a man thinketh that in doing aught he shall be hidden from God, he erreth.

Therefore also the immortals sent back again his son to be once more counted with the short-lived race of men. And he, when toward the bloom of his sweet youth the down began to shade his darkening cheek, took counsel with himself speedily to take to him for his wife the noble Hippodameia from her Pisan father's hand.

And he came and stood upon the margin of the hoary sea, alone in the darkness of the night, and called aloud on the deep-voiced Wielder of the Trident; and he appeared unto him nigh at his foot.

Then he said unto him: «Lo now, O Poseidon, if the kind gifts of the Cyprian goddess are anywise pleasant in thine eyes, restrain Oinomaos's bronze spear, and send me unto Elis upon a chariot exceeding swift, and give the victory to my hands.

«Thirteen lovers already hath Oinomaos slain, and still delayeth to give his daughter in marriage. Now a great peril alloweth not of a coward; and forasmuch as men must die, wherefore should one sit vainly in the dark through a dull and nameless age, and withouten noble deeds? Not so, but I will dare this strife: do thou give the issue I desire.»

Thus spake he, nor were his words in vain; for the god made him a glorious gift of a golden car and winged untiring steeds: so he overcame Oinomaos and won the maiden for his bride.

And he begat six sons, chieftains, whose thoughts were ever of brave deeds; and now hath he part in honor of blood-offerings in his grave beside Alpheos's stream, and hath a frequented tomb, whereto many strangers resort; and from afar off he beholdeth the glory of the Olympian games in the courses called of Pelops, where is striving of swift feet and of strong bodies brave to labor; but he that overcometh hath for the sake of those games a sweet tranquillity throughout his life for evermore.

Now the good that cometh of to-day is ever sovereign unto every man. My part it is to crown Hieron with an equestrian strain in Æolian mood; and sure am I that no host among men that now are shall I ever glorify in sounding labyrinths of song more learned in the learning of honor, and withal with more might to work thereto. A god hath guard over thy hopes, O Hieron, and taketh care for them with a peculiar care; and if he fail thee not, I trust that I shall again proclaim in song a sweeter glory yet, and find thereto in words a ready way, when to the fair-shining hill of Kronos I am come. Her strongest-wingèd dart my Muse hath yet in store.

Of many kinds is the greatness of men; but the highest is to be achieved by kings. Look thou not for more than this. May it be thine to walk loftily all thy life, and mine to be the friend of winners in the games, winning honor for my art among Hellenes everywhere.

SECOND OLYMPIAN ODE

For Theron of Akragas, Winner in the Chariot Race

[Theron's ancestors the Emmenidai migrated from Rhodes to Sicily, and first colonized Gela and then Akragas (the Latin Agrigentum and Italian Girgenti). His chariot won this victory B. C. 476.]

Lords of the lute, my songs, what god, what hero, or what man are we to celebrate? Verily of Zeus is Pisa the abode, of Herakles the Olympian feast was founded from the chief spoils of war, and Theron's name must we proclaim for his victory with the four-horse car, a righteous and god-fearing host, the stay of Akragas, of famous sires the flower, a savior of the State.

They, after long toils bravely borne, took by a river's side a sacred dwelling-place, and became the eye of Sicily, and a life of good luck clave to them, bringing them wealth and honor to crown their inborn worth.

O son of Kronos and of Rhea, lord of Olympus's seat, and of the chief of games and of Alpheos's ford, for joy in these my songs guard ever graciously their native fields for their sons that shall come after them.

Now of deeds done, whether they be right or wrong, not even Time, the father of all, can make undone the accomplishment; yet with happy fortune forgetfulness may come. For by high delights an alien pain is quelled and dieth, when the decree of God sendeth happiness to grow aloft and widely.

And this word is true concerning Kadmos's fair-throned daughters, whose calamities were great, yet their sore grief fell before greater good. Amid the Olympians, long-haired Semele still liveth, albeit she perished in the thunder's roar; and Pallas cherisheth her ever, and Father Zeus exceedingly, and her son, the ivy-bearing god. And in the sea too they say that to Ino, among the sea-maids of Nereus, life incorruptible hath been ordained for evermore.

Ay, but to mortals the day of death is certain never, neither at what time we shall see in calm the end of one of the Sun's children, the Days, with good thitherto unfailing; now this way and now that run currents bringing joys or toils to men.

Thus destiny, which from their fathers holdeth the happy fortune of this race, together with prosperity heaven-sent, bringeth ever at some other time better reverse: from the day when Laïos was slain by his destined son, who met him on the road and made fulfillment of the oracle spoken of old at Pytho. Then swift Erinys, when she saw it, slew by each other's hands his warlike sons; yet after that Polyneikes fell, Thersander lived after him, and won honor in the Second Strife and in the fights of war, a savior scion to the Adrastid house.

From him they have beginning of their race: meet is it that Ainesidamos receive our hymn of triumph on the lyre. For at Olympia he himself received a prize, and at Pytho, and at the Isthmus to his brother of no less a lot did kindred Graces bring crowns for the twelve rounds of the four-horse chariot race.

Victory setteth free the essayer from the struggle's griefs; yea, and the wealth that a noble nature hath made glorious bringeth power for this and that,—putting into the heart of man a deep and eager mood, a star far seen, a light wherein a man shall trust, if but the holder thereof knoweth the things that shall be: how that of all who die the guilty should pay penalty, for all the sins sinned in this realm of Zeus One judgeth under earth, pronouncing sentence by unloved constraint.

But evenly, ever in sunlight, night and day, an unlaborious life the good receive; neither with violent hand vex they the earth nor the waters of the sea, in that new world; but with the honored of the gods, whosoever had pleasure in keeping of oaths, they possess a tearless life: but the other part suffer pain too dire to look upon.

Then whosoever have been of good courage to the abiding steadfast thrice on either side of death, and have refrained their souls from all iniquity, travel the road of Zeus unto the tower of Kronos; there round the islands of the blest the ocean-breezes blow, and golden flowers are glowing, some from the land on trees of splendor, and some the water feedeth, with wreaths whereof they entwine their hands: so ordereth Rhadamanthos's just decree, whom at his own right hand hath ever the father Kronos, husband of Rhea, throned above all worlds.

Peleus and Kadmos are counted of that company; and the mother of Achilles, when her prayer had moved the heart of Zeus, bare thither her son, even him who overthrew Hector, Troy's unbending invincible pillar, even him who gave Kyknos to death, and the Ethiop son of the Morning.

Many swift arrows have I beneath my bended arm within my quiver; arrows that have a voice for the wise, but for the multitude they need interpreters. His art is true who of his nature hath knowledge; they who have but learnt, strong in the multitude of words, are but as crows that chatter vain things in strife against the divine bird of Zeus.

Come, bend thy bow on the mark, O my soul! — at whom again are we to launch our shafts of honor from a friendly mind? At Akragas will I take aim, and will proclaim and swear it with a mind of truth, that for a hundred years no city hath brought forth a man of mind more prone to well-doing towards friends, or of more liberal mood, than Theron.

Yet praise is overtaken of distaste, wherewith is no justice; but from covetous men it cometh, and is fain to babble against and darken the good man's noble deeds.

The sea-sand none hath numbered; and the joys that Theron hath given to others — who shall declare the tale thereof?

THIRD OLYMPIAN ODE

For Theron of Akragas, Winner of the Chariot Race

[This ode celebrates the same victory as the preceding one. It was sung at the feast of the Theoxenia, given by Theron in the name of Kastor and Polydeukes to the other gods. The clan of the Emmenidai, to which Theron belonged, was especially devoted to the worship of the Twins.]

Tyndareus's hospitable sons and lovely-haired Helen shall I please assuredly, in doing honor to renowned Akragas by a hymn upraised for Theron's Olympian crown; for hereunto hath the Muse been present with me that I should find out a fair new device, fitting to feet that move in Dorian time the Komos-voices' splendid strain.

For crowns entwined about his hair demand from me this god-appointed debt, that for Ainesidamos's son I join in seemly sort the lyre of various tones with the flute's cry and ordering of words.

And Pisa bids me speak aloud; for from her come to men songs of divine assignment, when the just judge of games, the Aitolian man, fulfilling Herakles's behests of old, hath laid upon one's hair above his brows pale-gleaming glory of olive.

That tree from Ister's shadowy springs did the son of Amphitryon bear, to be a memorial most glorious of Olympian triumphs, when that by his words he had won the Hyperborean folk, who serve Apollo. In loyal temper he besought for the precinct of Zeus, whereto all men go up, a plant that should be a shadow of all folk in common, and withal a crown for valorous deeds.

For already, when the altars had been sanctified to his sire, the midmonth Moon, riding her golden car, lit full the counter-flame of the eye of Even, and just judgment of great games did he ordain, and the fifth year's feast beside the holy steeps of Alpheos.

But no fair trees were nursed upon that place in Kronian Pelops's glens; whereof being naked, his garden seemed to him to be given over to the keen rays of the sun.

Then was it that his soul stirred to urge him into the land of Ister; where Leto's horse-loving daughter received him erst, when he was come from the ridged hills and winding dells of Arcady, what time his father laid constraint upon him to go at Eurystheus's bidding, to fetch the golden-hornèd hind which once Taÿgete vowed to her of Orthion, and made a sign thereon of consecration. For in that chase he saw also the land that lieth behind the blast of the cold North-wind: there he halted and marveled at the trees; and sweet desire thereof possessed him that he might plant them at the end of the course which the race-horses should run twelve times round.

So now to this feast cometh he in good-will in company with the Twins Divine, deep-girdled children. For to them he gave charge when he ascended into Olympus to order the spectacle of the games, both the struggle of man with man, and the driving of the nimble car.

Me anywise my soul stirreth to declare, that to the Emmenidai and to Theron hath glory come by gift of the Tyndaridai of goodly steeds, for that beyond all mortals they do honor to them with tables of hospitality, keeping with pious spirit the rite of blessed gods.

Now if Water be the Best, and of possessions Gold be the most precious, so now to the furthest bound doth Theron by his fair deeds attain, and from his own home touch the pillars of Herakles. Pathless the things beyond, pathless alike to the unwise and the wise. Here I will search no more; the quest were vain.

SEVENTH OLYMPIAN ODE

FOR DIAGORAS OF RHODES, WINNER IN THE BOXING-MATCH

[Diagoras of Rhodes, most famous of great boxers, won the victory here celebrated in 404 B. C.

Rhodes is said to have been colonized at the time of the Dorian migrations, by Argive Dorians from Epidauros, who were Herakleidai of the family of Tlepolemos. They founded a confederacy of three cities,— Kameiros, Lindos, and Ialysos. Ialysos was then ruled by the dynasty of the Eratidai. Their kingly power had now been extinct two hundred years, but the family was still pre-eminent in the State. Of this family was Diagoras, and probably the ode was sung at a family festival; but it commemorates the glories of the island generally. The Rhodians caused it to be engraved in letters of gold in the temple of Athene at Lindos.]

As when from a wealthy hand one lifting a cup, made glad within with the dew of the vine, maketh gift thereof to a youth, his daughter's spouse, a largess of the feast from home to home, an all-golden choicest treasure, that the banquet may have grace, and that he may glorify his kin; and therewith he maketh him envied in the eyes of the friends around him for a wedlock wherein hearts are wedded,—

So also I, my liquid nectar sending, the Muses' gift, the sweet fruit of my soul, to men that are winners in the games at Pytho or Olympia make holy offering. Happy is he whom good report encompasseth; now on one man, now on another doth the Grace that quickeneth look favorably, and tune for him the lyre and the pipe's stops of music manifold.

Thus to the sound of the twain am I come with Diagoras sailing home to sing the sea-girt Rhodes, child of Aphrodite and bride of Helios, that to a mighty and fair-fighting man, who by Alpheos's stream and by Kastalia's hath won him crowns, I may for his boxing make award of glory, and to his father Demegetos in whom Justice hath her delight, dwellers in the isle of three cities with an Argive host, nigh to a promontory of spacious Asia.

Fain would I truly tell from the beginning from Tlepolemos the message of my word, the common right of this puissant seed of Herakles. For on the father's side they claim from Zeus, and on the mother's from Astydameia, sons of Amyntor.

Now round the minds of men hang follies unnumbered: this is the unachievable thing, to find what shall be best hap for a man both presently and also at the last. Yea, for the very founder of this country once on a time struck with his staff of tough wild-olive-wood Alkmene's bastard brother Likymnios, in Tiryns, as he came forth from Midea's chamber, and slew him in the kindling of his wrath. So even the wise man's feet are turned astray by tumult of the soul.

Then he came to inquire of the oracle of God. And he of the golden hair, from his sweet-incensed shrine, spake unto him of a sailing of ships that should be from the shore of Lerna unto a pasture ringed with sea, where sometime the great king of gods rained on the city golden snow, what time by Hephaistos's handicraft, beneath the bronze-wrought axe, from the crown of her father's head Athene leapt to light, and cried aloud with an exceeding cry; and Heaven trembled at her coming, and Earth, the Mother.

Then also the god who giveth light to men, Hyperion, bade his beloved sons see that they guard the payment of the debt, that they should build first for the goddess an altar in the sight of all men, and laying thereon a holy offering they should make glad the hearts of the father, and of his daughter of the sounding spear. Now Reverence, Forethought's child, putteth valor and the joy of battle into the hearts of men; yet withal there cometh upon them bafflingly the cloud of forgetfulness, and maketh the mind to swerve from the straight path of action. For they, though they had brands burning, yet kindled not the seed of flame, but with fireless rites they made a grove on the hill of the citadel. For them Zeus brought a yellow cloud into the sky, and rained much gold upon the land; and Glaukopis herself gave them to excel the dwellers upon earth in every art of handicraft. For on their roads ran the semblances of beasts and creeping things, whereof they have great glory; for to him that hath knowledge the subtlety that is without deceit is the greater altogether.

Now the ancient story of men saith that when Zeus and the other gods made division of the earth among them, not yet was island Rhodes apparent in the open sea, but in the briny depths lay hid. And for that Helios was otherwhere, none drew a lot for him; so they left him portionless of land, that holy god. And when he spake thereof Zeus would cast lots afresh; but he suffered him not, for that he said that beneath the hoary sea he saw a certain land waxing from its root in earth, that should bring forth food for many men, and rejoice in flocks. And straightway he bade her of the golden fillet, Lachesis, to stretch her hands on high, nor violate the gods' great oath, but with the son of Kronos promise him that the isle sent up to the light of heaven should be thenceforth a title of himself alone.

And in the end of the matter his speech had fulfillment: there sprang up from the watery main an island, and the father who begetteth the keen rays of day hath the dominion thereof, even the lord of fire-breathing steeds. There sometime, having lain with Rhodes, he begat seven sons, who had of him minds wiser than any among the men of old; and one begat Kameiros, and Ialysos his eldest, and Lindos: and they held each apart their shares of cities, making threefold division of their Father's land, and these men call their dwelling-places. There is a sweet amends for his piteous ill-hap ordained for Tlepolemos, leader of the Tirynthians at the beginning, as for a god, even the leading thither of sheep for a savory burnt-offering, and the award of honor in games.

Of garlands from these games hath Diagoras twice won him crowns, and four times he had good luck at famous Isthmos, and twice following at Nemea, and twice at rocky Athens. And at Argos the bronze shield knoweth him, and the deeds of Arcadia and of Thebes and the yearly games Bœotian, and Pellene and Aigina, where six times he won; and the pillar of stone at Megara hath the same tale to tell.

But do thou, O Father Zeus, who holdest sway on the mountain ridges of Atabyrios, glorify the accustomed Olympian winner's hymn, and the man who hath done valiantly with his fists: give him honor at the hands of citizens and of strangers; for he walketh in the straight way that abhorreth insolence, having learnt well the lessons his true soul hath taught him, which hath come to him from his noble sires. Darken not thou the light of one who springeth from the same stock of Kallianax. Surely with the joys of Eratidai the whole city maketh mirth. But the varying breezes even at the same point of time speed each upon their various ways.

FIRST PYTHIAN ODE

O GOLDEN lyre,
Apollo's, dark-haired Muses' joint heirloom,
Alert for whom
The dancer's footstep listens, and the choir
Of singers wait the sound,
Beginning of the round
Of festal joy, whene'er thy quivering strings
Strike up a prelude to their carolings:
Thou slakest the lancèd bolt of quenchless fire;
Yea, drooped each wing that through the æther sweeps,
Upon his sceptre Zeus's eagle sleeps,

The bird-king crowned!
The while thou sheddest o'er his beaked head bowed
A darkling cloud,
Sweet seal of the eyelids,—and in dreamful swound
His rippling back and sides
Heave with thy music's tides;
Thou bidst impetuous Ares lay apart
His keen-edged spear, and soothe with sleep his heart;

Thou launchest at the breasts of gods, and bound
As by a spell, they own thy lulling power,
Latoides's and the deep-zoned Muses' dower.

But all the unloved of Zeus, far otherwise,
Hearing the voice of the Pierides,
Or on the earth or on the restless seas,
Flee panic-stricken. One in Tartaros lies,
Typhon, the gods' great hundred-headed foe.
The famed Kilikian cavern cradled him;
But now the hill-crags, lo,
O'er Kymè, towering from their ocean-rim,
And Sicily press upon his shaggy breast;
Adds to the rest
The frost-crowned prop of heaven her weight of woe;
Aitna, the yearlong nurse of biting snow,

Whose founts of fire
Gush from her caves, most pure, untamable:
And all day well
The rivers, and the gleaming smoke-wreath's spire;
And in the gloom of night—
A lurid-purple light—
The flame upheaves vast rocks, and with a roar
Whirls them far out upon the ocean-floor.
It is yon monster makes outpour these dire
Volcanic torrents: wondrous to behold,
A wonder e'en to hear by others told

How, pinionèd
'Neath dark-leaved heights of Aitna and the plain,
He writhes in pain,
His back all grided by his craggy bed.
Thine, thine the grace we implore,
O Zeus, that rulest o'er
This mountain, forehead of the fruitful land,
Over whose namesake city near at hand
Her illustrious founder hath a glory shed,
Her name proclaiming in the herald's cries
What time his car at Pytho won the prize,

The car of Hieron. By sailors bound
On outward voyage is a favoring breeze
Held first of blessings, bearing prophecies
Of fair beginning with fair ending crowned.

Auspicious falls her fortune by that word,
For conquering steeds ordained to future fame,
And to an honored name
In many a song of festal joyance heard.
O Phoibos, Lykian and Delian king
That lovest the spring
Kastalian of Parnasos, hold this fast,
Make her a nurse of heroes to the last.

For lo, god-sprung
Are all the means to human high emprise:
Men are born wise,
And strong of hand and eloquent of tongue.
And fain to praise, I trust
I fling not as in joust
One whirls and hurls the bronze-cheeked javelin
Without the lists, yet, hurling far, to win
Over my rivals. Ah (the wish hath clung),
If Hieron's days but wealth and bliss bestow
As now, and add forgetfulness of woe,—

How they would lead
Back crowding memories of battles old
Wherein, stern-souled,
He stood what time the gods gave them a meed
Of honor such as ne'er
Hath fallen to Hellene's share,
Wealth's lordly crown. Yea, late he went to war
Like Philoktetes, while one fawned before—
A proud-souled suitor for a friend in need.
Well known is the old story how men came
To bear from Lemnos a sore-wounded frame,

E'en godlike heroes Poias's archer-son;
Who, sacking Priam's city, brought to close
The Danaoi's toils, himself still in the throes
Of body-sickness. But by fate 'twas done.
And such to Hieron be God's decrees,
Granting in season, as the years creep by,
All things wherefor he sigh.
Nor, Muse, shalt thou forget Deinomenes,
Chanting the four-horsed chariot's reward.
Hath he not shared
The triumph of his father? Up then, sing
A song out of our love to Aitna's king.

Hieron bestowed
On him that city, built on freedom's base
By the gods' grace
After the canons of the Hyllid code.
Glad are Pamphylos's seed,
And the Herakleidan breed
Beneath Taÿgetos, Dorians to remain
And keep the laws Aigimios did ordain,
Rich and renowned. Once Pindos their abode;
Amyklai then, where, the Tyndárids near
Of the white horses, flourished still their spear.

O Zeus supreme,
Such lot may human tongues fore'er award
In true accord,
Swayer and swayed by Amenanos's stream.
Beneath thy blessing hand
A hero in command,
Transmitting through his son his wise decrees,
Shall lead a people on the paths of peace.
Keep hushed at home, I pray, the battle scream
Of the Phœnician and Tyrrhenian host
Whose insolent ships went down off Kyme's coast:

Such fate they suffered at the conquering hands
Of Syracuse's lord, who plunged the pride
Of their swift galleys in the whelming tide,
Rescuing Hellas from her grievous bands.
For Athens's favor song of Salamis pleads,
In Sparta let me linger o'er the fight
Beneath Kithairon's height,—
Disastrous both unto the crooked-bow Medes;
And where the Himeras rolls his flood along,
Bides theme for song
Of triumph in Deinomenes's children's praise,
Whose valorous deeds cut short their foemen's days.

Time well thy rede.
Gather the many strands that loosely run,
And twist in one:
Less will the noise of censuring tongues succeed.
Once surfeit slips between,
Dulled are hope's edges keen.
And much do words in others' praise oppress
The souls of men in secret. Ne'ertheless,

Since envy better is than pity, speed
On thy fair course; be helmsman just among
Thy people; on truth's anvil forge thy tongue.

The slightest spark
Thy stroke sends glimmering past falls lustrous now:
High steward thou;
And many eyes thine every action mark.
But in thy spirit's flower
Biding from hour to hour,
If honeyed speech of men may gladden thee,
Count not the cost. Let thy sail belly free
Unto the wind, as master of a bark.
No juggling gains allure thee, O my friend!
The voice of fame, that outlives this life's end,

Alone reveals the lives of men that pass,
To song and story. Kroisos's kindly heart
Dies not; but Phalaris, that with cruel art
Burned men alive inside the bull of brass,
A hated bruit weighs down. Nor will the lyres,
Filling the vaulted halls with unison
Of sweet strains, make him one
Among names warbled in the young men's choirs.
Prosperity is first of fortune's meeds;
Glory succeeds.
Who hath won both and kept, wealth and renown
He hath attained unto the supreme crown.

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature,› by A. G. Newcomer

ALEXIS PIRON

(1689–1773)

Born a hundred years later, he would have been an ideal journalist,» says Saintsbury of Piron. The brilliant ill-natured satirist, who sneered at everything and everybody, was out of sympathy with his age. He was always on the alert for flaws in existing conditions. He was a revolutionist, despising classical platitudes, yet with no new creed to advance. Voltaire and his brother philosophers, as well as dead poets, were butts for his ridicule.

Alexis Piron

Alexis Piron, born at Dijon in 1689, was the son of the gentle Burgundian poet Aimé Piron, popular for his Noëls, or Christmas songs. From him Piron inherited a love of verse; and at an early age he deserted the profession of law for that of poetry. A licentious ode, written when he was twenty, started him with an unfortunate reputation; and many years later incurred the heavy retribution of exclusion from the French Academy. Although immoral, the poem was witty. «If Piron wrote the famous ode,» said Fontenelle, «he should be scolded but admitted. If he did not write it, he should be excluded.» Others thought the reverse; and although he softened the disappointment with a pension, the King refused to sanction Piron's election.

In 1819 Piron left Dijon for Paris, where he spent years as a hard-working playwright, sometimes in collaboration with Le Sage. An attempt was made to suppress the theatre, by forbidding dramatists to introduce more than one character on the stage at a time. His fellows despaired; but Piron's ingenuity was equal to the emergency, and he produced 'Arlequin Deukalion,' a lively monologue in three acts, which charmed all Paris. He also wrote many pot-boiling dramas, forgotten now; and he produced one masterpiece,—a five-act comedy, 'La Métromanie.' The self-delusions of a vain would-be poet, who is struggling for fame and also for academic prizes, is not an emotional theme. Yet the skillful intrigue and graceful malice of the verse give it permanent charm. ‹La Métromanie› is still revived occasionally on the French stage, as a model of eighteenth-century wit.

But Piron's name stands above all for epigram; for sharp retort and satiric witticism at the expense of the Academy, of Voltaire,—the man he envied and disliked,—and of nearly every one who fell in his way. Samples of these lighter, more spontaneous compositions are included in every collection of French *bons mots*. Crisp and subtle, most of them are too essentially French to be caught in English without a knowledge of the occasion which prompted them.

An acquaintance who had written a poem full of plagiarisms insisted upon reading it to him. From time to time Piron took off his hat, until at last the poet demanded the reason. «It is my habit to greet acquaintances,» said Piron.

The Archbishop of Paris said graciously to him: «Have you read my last mandate, Monsieur Piron?» «Have you?» retorted Piron.

One day the Abbé Desfontaines, seeing Piron richly dressed, exclaimed: «What a costume for such a man!» «What a man for the costume!» quickly answered the poet.

This irrepressible wit constantly embroiled him with others. It was swift and direct, going straight to its target with a malicious twang. So in spite of lovable qualities, which came out best in his home life, this wittiest of Frenchmen made few friends, and lived in constant dissension with his fellow-writers. There is caustic bitterness in the epitaph he himself composed:—

«Here lies Piron, who was nothing,—
Not even Academician!»

FROM ‹LA MÉTROMANIE›

[Damis, a visionary young man devoted to writing verse, has escaped from his creditors in Paris, and under an assumed name is enjoying himself in the country, where Mondor, his valet, discovers and reasons with him.]

MONDOR [*handing Damis a letter*]—Ah! Thank Heaven, I've unearthed you at last! [*Damis takes the letter and reads it to himself.*] Monsieur, I've been hunting for you a whole week. I've been all over Paris a hundred times. I was afraid of the river; lest in your extravagant visions, hunting some rhyme and reading in the clouds, Pegasus with loose bridle should have boldly borne your Muse to the nets of Saint Cloud.

Damis [*aside, indicating the letter he has read*]—Oh! Oh! Shall I, shall I? Here's what keeps me back.

Mondor—Listen, monsieur: my conscience, be careful! Some fine day—

Damis [*interrupting*]—Some fine day will you hold your tongue?

Mondor—As you please. Speech is free, anyway. Well, some one told me you might be here, but no one seemed to know you. I've been all over this great place, but if you hadn't appeared I'd have missed you again.

Damis—This whole inclosure is swarming with my admirers. But didn't you ask for me by my family name?

Mondor—Of course. How should I have asked?

Damis—That is no longer my name.

Mondor—You've changed it?

Damis—Yes. For a week I've been imitating my confrères. They rarely distinguish themselves under their true names, and it is the common custom of such people to adopt or invent a new name.

Mondor—Your name then is?

Damis—De l'Empirée. And I'll vouch it shall live!

Mondor—De l'Empirée? Ah! As there is nothing under heaven to make your name longer, as you don't possess anything under the heavenly vault, you have nothing left but the name of the envelope. So your mind has become a great land-owner? Space is vast, so it has plenty of room. But when it ascends alone to its domain, will your body allow you to go too?

Damis—Do you think that a man of my talents can rule his own course and dispose of himself? The destiny of people like me is like that of drawing-room belles: all the world wants them. I allowed myself to be brought here to Monsieur Francalen's by an impudent fellow whom I scarcely know. He presents me, and, dupe of the household, I serve as passport to the puppy who protects me. They were still at table, and made room for us. I grew joyful, and so did we all. I became excited and took fire. Uttered lightnings and thunders. My flight was so rapid and prodigious that those who tried to follow me were lost in the heavens. Then the company with acclamations bestowed upon me the name which descending from Pindus shall enrich the archives.

Mondor—And impoverish us both!

Damis—Then a comfortable sumptuous carriage rolled me in a quarter of an hour to this delightful spot, where I laugh, sing, and drink; and all from complaisance!

Mondor — From complaisance — so be it. But don't you know —

Damis — Eh, what?

Mondor — While you are sporting in the fields, Fortune in the city is a little jealous: Monsieur Balirois,—

Damis [*interrupting*] — What?

Mondor — Your uncle from Toulouse,—

Damis — Well?

Mondor — Is at Paris.

Damis — Let him stay there!

Mondor — Very well. Without thinking or wishing that you should know anything about it.

Damis — Why do you tell me, then?

Mondor — Ah! what indifference! Well, is nothing of any consequence to you any more? A rich old uncle upon whom your lot depends, who is continually repenting of the good he means to do you, who is trying to regulate your genius according to his own taste, who detests your devilish verses, and who has kept us for five good years, thank God, for you to study! You may expect some horrible storms! He is coming incognito to find out what you're about. Perhaps he has already discovered that in your soaring you have not taken any license yet except those he feared,— what you call in your rubrics poetical licenses. Dread his indignation, I tell you! You will be disinherited. That word ought to move you if you're not very hardened!

Damis [*calmly offering Mondor a paper*] — Mondor, take these verses to the Mercury.

Mondor [*refusing the paper*] — Fine fruits of my sermon!

Damis — Worthy of the preacher!

Mondor — What? How much is this paper worth to us?

Damis — Honor!

Mondor [*shaking his head*] — Hum! honor!

Damis — Do you think I'm telling fictions?

Mondor — There's no honor in not paying one's debts; and with honor alone you pay them very ill.

Damis — What a silly beast is an argumentative valet! Well, do what I tell you.

Mondor — Now, not wishing to offend, you are a little too much at your ease, monsieur. You have all the pleasure, and I have all the annoyance. I have you and your creditors both on my back. I have to hear them and get rid of them. I'm tired of playing the comedy for you, of shielding you, of putting off till another day so as brazenly to borrow again. This way of living is repugnant to my honesty. I am tired of trying to deliver you from this barking crew. I give it up. I repent. I won't lie any more. Let them all come,—the bath-keeper, the merchant, the tailor, your landlord. Let them nose you out and pursue you. Get yourself out of it if you can; and let's see—

Damis [*interrupting, and again holding out the paper*]—You may get me the last Mercury. Do you hear?

Mondor [*still refusing the paper*]—Will it suit you to have me come back with all the people I've just named?

Damis—Bring them.

Mondor—You jest?

Damis—No.

Mondor—You'll see.

Damis—I will wait for you.

Mondor [*taking a few steps toward the door*]—Oh, well, they'll give you diversion.

Damis—And you that of seeing them overcome with joy.

Mondor [*coming back*]—Will you pay them?

Damis—Certainly.

Mondor—With what money?

Damis—Don't trouble yourself.

Mondor [*aside*]—Heyday! Can he be in funds?

Damis—Let us settle now how much we owe each other.

Mondor [*aside*]—Zounds! he'd teach me to weigh my words!

Damis—To the tutor?

Mondor [*in a gentler voice*]—Thirty or forty pistoles.

Damis—To the draper, the hair-dresser, the landlord?

Mondor—As much.

Damis—To the tailor?

Mondor—Eighty.

Damis—To the innkeeper?

Mondor—A hundred.

Damis—To you?

Mondor [*drawing back and bowing*]—Monsieur—

Damis—How much?

Mondor—Monsieur—

Damis—Speak!

Mondor—I abuse—

Damis—My patience!

Mondor — Yes: I beg pardon. It is true that in my zeal I have failed in respect; but the past made me suspicious of the future.

Damis — A hundred crowns? Guess! More or less, it does not matter. We'll share the prizes I shall soon win.

Mondor — The prizes?

Damis — Yes: the silver or gold which France distributes in different places to whoever composes the best verses. I have competed everywhere,— at Paris, Rouen, Toulouse, Marseilles: everywhere I've done wonders!

Mondor — Ah! so well that Paris will pay the board, Toulouse the barber, Marseilles the draper, and the Devil my wages!

Damis — You doubt that I will win everywhere?

Mondor — No, doubt nothing; but haven't you a better security for the tailor and the landlord?

Damis — Yes, indeed: the noblest kind of security. The Théâtre Français is to give my play to-day. My secret is safe. Except one actor and yourself, no one in the world knows it is mine. [*Showing the letter which Mondor brought him.*] This very evening they play it — this says so. To-day my talents are revealed to Europe. I have taken the first steps toward immortality. Dear friend, how much this great day means to me! Another hope —

Mondor — Chimerical!

Damis — An adorable girl, only daughter, rare, famous, clever, incomparable!

Mondor — What do you hope from this rare girl?

Damis — If I triumph to-day, to-morrow I can be her husband. [*Mondor wants to go.*] To-morrow — Where are you going, Mondor?

Mondor — To seek a master.

Damis — Eh! Why am I so suddenly judged unworthy?

Mondor — Monsieur, air is very poor nourishment.

Damis — Who wants you to live on air? Are you mad?

Mondor — Not at all.

Damis — Faith, you're not wise! What, you revolt on the eve — at the very moment of harvest? Since you force me to details unworthy of me, let us take a clear view of the state of my fortunes, past and present. The payment of your wages is already sure: one part to-night and the rest the day after to-morrow. I will succeed; I will marry a scholarly woman. That is the beautiful future before me. Generous young eaglets, worthy their race, will fly after us. If we have three, we will bequeath one to comedy, one to tragedy, and the third to lyricism. These three possess the whole stage. And my spouse and I, if we uttered each year, I but a half-poem, she but a single novel, would draw crowds from all sides. Behold gold and silver rolling through the house, and our united intellects levying from theatre and press!

Mondor—In self-esteem you are a rare man, and on that pillow you nap soundly. But the noise of hissing may wake you.

Damis [*forcing him to take the paper*]—Go! My embarrassments merit some consideration. One play announced, another in my head; one in which I am playing, and another all ready to read! This is having the mind occupied.

Mondor—An inheritance and lots of time thrown away.

[*He goes, and Damis returns to the house.*]

THE OTHERS

So rich in famous men was Greece,
That still she vaunts them to us:
But seven wise men was all she had;
Judge then how many fools!

EXPERIENCE

Work without thinking of gain;
Be neither selfish nor vain;
Love; do not hate nor disdain;
Be sober and gay; drink good wine;
And thy life at its final confine
Shall outvalue a monarch's long reign.

EPITAPH

My journey here below is through;
Life is indeed a narrow strait.
Once saw I clear, now dimmed the view;
Once wise was I, but now I'm blate.
I, step by step, have reached the pass
Which may be shunned by fool nor sage,
To go, where know I not, alas!
Adieu, Piron, and *bon voyage!*

AUGUST VON PLATEN

(1796–1835)

It is by reason rather of his exquisite perfection of form than of his poetic inspiration, that Count Platen maintained his distinguished place among the poets of Germany. The service which he rendered to German literature was this: that amid the mad rush of Romanticism towards *banal* sentimentality and fastastic formlessness, he stood firm to the ideal of pure and lofty thoughts cast in a chastened and classic form. The softer emotions rarely find voice in his verse; but human dignity, profound sorrow, manly independence, and fierce hatred of oppression, have thrilling utterance. He strove, like Goethe, to live in a serene atmosphere of intellect, disdaining popular tastes and vulgar sentiments. Truth was his Muse, and his poetry reflects her cold and crystal beauty.

August von Platen

Count August von Platen-Hallermund was born of a wealthy and noble family at Ansbach, on October 24th, 1796. He was educated at the cadet academy of Munich, and at the age of eighteen became a lieutenant in the Bavarian army. His part in the campaign of 1815 was a tame one, and garrison life was irksome to him. He spent most of his time on furlough, studying philosophy and philology at the universities of Würzburg and Erlangen. Schelling exercised an austere influence upon his thought.

In 1821 Platen came before the public as a poet, with his exquisite and inimitable ‘Ghaselen’ (Gazels),—poems in the Persian manner; and in another book of verse called ‘Lyrische Blätter’ (Lyric Leaves). In 1823 came a second volume of ‘Gazels.’ These poems elicited warm words of praise from Goethe, and attracted the attention of poets generally. It was the refinement of thought, and the easy precision with which a difficult verse-form was handled, that astonished and fascinated. For purposes of dogmatic classification Platen may be enrolled among the Romantic poets; but except in his choice of exotic material he has little in common with them. Limpid clearness and severe structural beauty distinguish even his earliest work, and these qualities were at last elevated by him into a gospel of art. Few poets have taken their calling more seriously, or held their gifts more sacred.

In 1824 Platen visited Venice; and the noble 'Sonnets from Venice' show how his talents were stimulated there. Thenceforth his life was exclusively devoted to scholarly pursuits and the work of poetic creation. He was filled with glowing indignation at the bungling of the later Romanticists, the lyrics of empty words, the novels of mass without matter, and the tasteless «tragedies of fate.» This indignation was concentrated in a comedy after the manner of Aristophanes, 'Die Verhängnissvolle Gabel' (The Fatal Fork). The cordial recognition which Platen received from Goethe, Uhland, and Rückert raised his already well-developed self-esteem to the fighting point. He became a poet militant, and so arose the unfortunate literary war with Immermann and Heine. A second Aristophanic comedy was directed against Immermann,—'Der Romantische Œdipus' (The Romantic Œdipus): Immermann had ridiculed the 'Gazels'; and Heine, who had joined in the ridicule, was included in the satire. Heine's reply, deliciously witty but bitterly personal, appeared in the 'Reisebilder' (Travel-Pictures).

The indifference with which literary Germany generally received Platen's enthusiasm for dignity of thought and purity of form increased his wrath, and he left his native land in disgust. In Florence, Rome, and Naples he found more congenial surroundings. Goethe blamed him for not forgetting the pettinesses of German literary strife amid such scenes. Nevertheless these years were the happiest of his life. Ballads, lyrics, odes, and dramas swelled the volume of his contributions to literature. He wrote also a perfunctory 'History of the Kingdom of Naples'; and a charming fairy epic, 'Die Abassiden,' written in 1830 but not published until 1834. His last drama was the 'League of Cambray.' The flaming 'Polenlieder' (Songs of the Poles), which gave restrained but powerful expression to his love of freedom, and his hatred of the Czar, were forbidden by the censor, and did not appear until after the poet's death. It was this act of tyranny that elicited the glowing stanzas with which the series comes to an end.

Platen returned to Germany in 1832, and in the following year brought out the first complete edition of his works. His poems won new admirers constantly, and long before his death he had ceased to be the voice of one crying in the wilderness. In 1834 he went back to Italy; and on December 5th, 1835, he died in Sicily.

Platen was an alien in his native land. It was not only that he was rejected: he was not himself in touch with his time. Indeed, it is his chief merit that he checked the movement that threatened literary chaos. After his death, enthusiastic admiration went almost as far in the upward direction as indifference had sunk in the downward. To-day we recognize in Platen the «sculptor in words,» the master of form, the stickler for truth, and the sincere thinker, who, unable to reconcile himself to vulgar views of life, died disappointed and in exile, rather

«Than the yoke of blind plebeian hatred bear.»

[This, and other selections from Longfellow's ‹Poets and Poetry of Europe,› are reprinted with the approval of Houghton, Mifflin & Co., publishers.]

REMORSE

How I started up in the night, in the night,
Drawn on without rest or reprieval!
The streets, with their watchmen, were lost to my sight,
As I wandered so light
In the night, in the night,
Through the gate with the arch mediæval.

The mill-brook rushed through the rocky height,
I leaned o'er the bridge in my yearning;
Deep under me watched I the waves in their flight,
As they glided so light
In the night, in the night,
Yet backward not one was returning.

O'erhead were revolving, so countless and bright,
The stars in melodious existence;
And with them the moon, more serenely bedight;—
They sparkled so light
In the night, in the night,
Through the magical, measureless distance.

And upward I gazed in the night, in the night,
And again on the waves in their fleeting;
Ah, woe! thou hast wasted thy days in delight!
Now silence thou, light
In the night, in the night,
The remorse in thy heart that is beating.

Translation of Henry W. Longfellow.

BEFORE THE CONVENT OF ST. JUST, 1556

From Trench's ‹The Story of Justin Martyr and Other Poems,› and in ‹Poets and Poetry of Europe.›

'Tis night, and storms continually roar;
Ye monks of Spain, now open me the door.

Here in unbroken quiet let me fare,
Save when the loud bell startles you to prayer.

Make ready for me what your house has meet,
A friar's habit and a winding-sheet.

A little cell unto my use assign:
More than the half of all this world was mine.

The head that stoops unto the scissors now,
Under the weight of many crowns did bow.

The shoulders on which now the cowl is flung,—
On them the ermine of the Cæsars hung.

I living now as dead myself behold,
And fall in ruins like this kingdom old.

THE GRAVE IN THE BUSENTO

By Cosenza songs of wail at midnight wake Busento's shore;
O'er the wave resounds the answer, and amid the vortex's roar,

Valiant Goths, like spectres, steal along the banks with hurried pace,
Weeping o'er Alaric dead, the best, the bravest of his race.

Ah, too soon, from home so far, was it their lot to dig his grave,
While still o'er his shoulders flowed his youthful ringlets' flaxen wave.

On the shore of the Busento ranged, they with each other vied,
As they dug another bed to turn the torrent's course aside.

In the waveless hollow, turning o'er and o'er the sod, the corpse
Deep into the earth they sank, in armor clad, upon his horse;

Covered then with earth again the horse and rider in the grave:
That above the hero's tomb the torrent's lofty plants might wave.

And, a second time diverted, was the flood conducted back;
Foaming rushed Busento's billows onward in their wonted track.

And a warrior chorus sang, «Sleep with thy honors, hero brave;
Ne'er a foot of lucre-lusting Roman desecrate thy grave!»

Far and wide the songs of praise resounded in the Gothic host;
Bear them on Busento's billow! bear them on from coast to coast!

Translation of A. Baskerville.

VENICE

VENICE, calm shadow of her elder day,
Still, in the land of dreams, lives fresh and fair;
Where frowned the proud Republic's Lion, there
His empty prison-walls keep holiday.
The brazen steeds that, wet with briny spray,
On yonder church-walls shake their streaming hair,
They are the same no longer — ah! they wear
The bridle of the Corsican conqueror's sway!
Where is the people gone, the kindly race
That reared these marble piles amid the waves,
Which e'en decay invests with added grace?
Not in the brows of yon degenerate slaves
Think thou the traits of their great sires to trace; —
Go, read them, hewn in stone, on doges' graves!

Translation of Charles T. Brooks.

«FAIR AS THE DAY»

FAIR as the day that bodes as fair a morrow,
With noble brow, with eyes in heaven's dew,
Of tender years, and charming as the new,
So found I thee, — so found I too my sorrow.
Oh, could I shelter in thy bosom borrow,
There most collected where the most unbent!
Oh, would this coyness were already spent,
That aye adjourns our union till to-morrow!
But canst thou hate me? Art thou yet unshaken?
Wherefore refusest thou the soft confession
To him who loves, yet feels himself forsaken?
Oh, when thy future love doth make expression,
An anxious rapture will the moment waken,
As with a youthful prince at his accession!

From Longfellow's ‹Poets and Poetry of Europe.› Translator anonymous.

TO SCHELLING

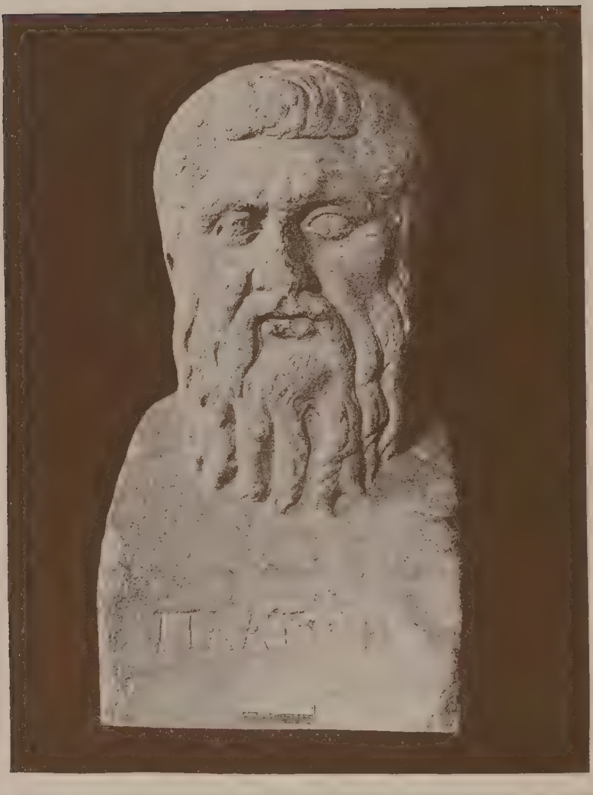
IS HE not also *Beauty's* sceptre bearing,
Who holds in *Truth's* domain the kingly right?
Thou seest in the Highest both unite,
Like long-lost melodies together pairing.
Thou wilt not scorn the dainty motley band,
With clang of foreign music hither faring,
A little gift for thee, from Morning Land;
Thou wilt discern the beauty they are wearing.
Among the flowers, forsooth, of distant valleys,
I hover like the butterfly, that clings
To summer sweets and with a trifle dallies;
But thou dost dip thy holy, honeyed wings,
Beyond the margin of the world's flower-chalice,
Deep, deep into the mystery of things.

From Longfellow's ‹Poets and Poetry of Europe.› Translator anonymous.

VOLUNTARY EXILE

MY RANGING spirit seeks the far and wide,
And fain would soar and ever further soar:
I never long could linger on one shore,
Though Paradise should bloom on every side.
My spirit, sore perplexed and inly tried,
In this short life must often needs deplore
How easy 'tis to leave the homestead door;
But ah, how bitter elsewhere to abide!
Yet whoso hates things base with fervid soul,
Is driven from his country in despair,
When men, grown sordid, seek a sordid goal.
Far wiser then the exile's lot to share,
Than 'midst a folk that plays a childish rôle
The yoke of blind plebeian hatred bear.

Translation of Charles Harvey Genung.



PLATO.

PLATO

(427–347 B. C.)

BY PAUL SHOREY

PLATO, the first of philosophers, and the only writer of prose who ranks in the literature of power with the bibles and supreme poets of the world, was born at Athens in the year 427 B. C., and died in the year 347. His youth was contemporaneous with that fatal Peloponnesian war in which the Athens of Pericles dissipated, in a fratricidal contest, the energies that might have prolonged the flowering season of the Greek genius for another century. His maturity and old age were passed as writer and teacher in the subdued and chastened Athens of the restoration, whose mission it was, as schoolmaster of Greece, to disengage the spirit of Hellenism from local and temporal accidents, and prepare it — not without some loss of native charm — for assimilation by the Hellenistic, the Roman, the modern world. Like his pupil the Stagirite Aristotle, he embraces in the compass of his thoughts the entire experience, and reflective criticism of life, of the Greek race. But because he was an Athenian born, and had nourished his mighty youth on the still living traditions of the great age, he transmits the final outcome of Greek culture to us in no quintessential distillation of abstract formulas, but in vivid dramatic pictures that make us actual participants in the spiritual intoxication, the Bacchic revelry of philosophy, as Alcibiades calls it, that accompanied the most intense, disinterested, and fruitful outburst of intellectual activity in the annals of mankind.

It was an age of discussion. The influence of the French *salon* on the tone and temper of modern European literature has been often pointed out. But the drawing-room conversation of fine ladies and gentlemen has its obvious limits. In the Athens of Socrates, for the first and last time, men talked with men seriously, passionately, on other topics than those of business or practical politics; and their discussions created the logic, the rhetoric, the psychology, the metaphysic, the ethical and political philosophy of western Europe, and wrought out the distinctions, the definitions, the categories in which all subsequent thought has been cast. The Platonic dialogues are a dramatic idealization of that stimulating soul-communion which Diotima celebrates as the consummation of the right love of the beautiful; wherein a man is copiously inspired to declare to his friend what human excellence really is, and what are the practices and the ways of life of the truly good man. And in addition to their formal and inspirational value, they remain, even after the codification of their leading thoughts in the systematic treatises of Aristotle, a still unexhausted storehouse of ideas, which, as Emerson says, «make great havoc of our originalities.» This incomparable suggestiveness is due — after the genius of Plato — to the wealth of virgin material which then lay awaiting the interpretative ingenuity of these brilliant talkers, and the synoptic eye of the philosopher who should first be able to see the one in the many and the many in the one.

Before the recent transformation of all things by physical science, the experience of the modern world offered little to the generalizing philosophic mind which the Periclean Greek could not find in the mythology, the poetry, the art, the historical vicissitudes, the colonial enterprises, and the picturesquely various political life of his race. Modern science was lacking. But the guesses of the pre-Socratic poet-philosophers had started all its larger hypotheses, and had attained at a bound to conceptions of evolution which, though unverified in detail, distinctly raised all those far-reaching questions touching the origin and destiny of man and the validity of moral and religious tradition, that exercise our own maturer thought.

The concentration and conscious enjoyment of this rich culture in the intense life of imperial Athens gave rise to new ideals in education, and to the new Spirit of the Age, embodied in the Sophists — or professional teachers of rhetoric and of the art of getting on in the world. Their sophistry consisted not in any positive intention of corruption, but in the intellectual bewilderment of a broad but superficial half-culture, which set them adrift with no anchorage of unquestioned principle or fixed faith in any kind of ultimate reality. They thus came to regard the conflicting religious, ethical, and social ideals of an age of transition merely as convenient themes for the execution of dialectical and rhetorical flourishes, or as forces to be estimated in the shrewd conduct of the game of life.

Among these showy talkers moved the strange uncouth figure of Socrates, hardly distinguished from them by the writers of comedy or by the multitude, and really resembling them in the temporarily unsettling effect, upon the mind of ingenuous youth, of his persistent questioning of all untested conventions and traditions. Two things, in addition to the stoic simplicity of his life, his refusal to accept pay for his teaching, and his ironical affectation of ignorance, especially distinguish his conversation from theirs: First, a persistent effort to clear up the intellectual confusion of the age before logic, by insistence on definitions that shall distinguish essence from accident.

Second, an adamantine faith in the morality of common-sense, and in the absoluteness of the distinction between right and wrong.

Every student must decide for himself which he will accept as the probable Socrates of history: the homely portrait of Xenophon, or the speculative, super-subtle, mystic protagonist of these dialogues, fertile in invention, inexhaustible in resource, equal to every situation, seemingly all things to all men, yet guarding ever his indomitable moral and intellectual integrity behind a veil of playful irony. This Platonic Socrates stands out as the second religious figure of the European world in the fourfold gospel of his conversation, his trial, his temptation, and his death, recorded in the ‘Gorgias,’ the ‘Apology,’ the ‘Crito,’ and the ‘Phædo.’ However much of this result criticism may attribute to the genius of the reporter, we divine a strangely potent personality in the very fact that he dominated to the end the imagination of a scholar who went to school to many other influences, and who absorbed the entire culture of that wondrous age in «a synthesis without parallel before or since.» Amid all the dramatic variety, the curious subtlety, the daring speculation, the poetic Pythagorean mysticism of the later dialogues, the two chief Socratic notes persist. There is always an effort to dissipate the clouds of intellectual confusion by the aid of some logic of definition and relevancy; and however often the quest for absolute verities loses itself in baffling labyrinths of dialectic, or issues in an *impasse* of conflicting probabilities, the faith is never lost that truth exists, may be won by persistent wooing, and is in the end essentially moral.

Associated with Socrates are groups of the noble youths of Athens; with worthy burghers who are their parents, guardians, or friends, an inner circle of earnest disciples or devoted enthusiasts attached to the person of the master, an outer circle of local celebrities and of all the brilliant personalities whom the policy of Pericles drew to the Prytaneion of Greek intellect,— visiting sophists, rhetoricians, philosophers. The dramatic setting is some typical scene of Athenian life. Socrates returning from the campaign of Potidæa strolls into a gymnasium, inquires of the progress of the young men, and draws the reigning favorite Charmides into a discussion of the nature and definition of that virtue of temperance which is the bloom of youthful beauty. He is aroused at earliest dawn by the knock of the youthful enthusiast Hippocrates, who comes breathless to announce that «Protagoras is in town,» and that there is to be a great gathering of wise men at the house of Callias. Thither they proceed, and hear and say many things. He meets Phædrus carrying a roll under his arm, and fresh from the rhetorical school of Lysias, and joins him in a constitutional beyond the city gates while they discourse on the philosophy of style, and incidentally on love. He is a guest at the banquet held to celebrate the success of Agathon's new tragedy at the Dionysiac festival; and after listening benignantly to the young men's euphuistic panegyrics on the great god Love, expounds to them the lore he learned from the wise woman Diotima; and then, as the night wears on, drinks all the guests under the table while he proves to Aristophanes and Agathon that the true dramatic artist will excel in both tragedy and comedy. Turning homeward from attendance on a religious ceremony at the Peiræus, he is constrained by the playful importunity of a band of young friends to remain for the torchlight race in the evening. They proceed to the house of the delightful old man Cephalus, father of the orator Lysias, where a conversation springs up on old age and the right use of wealth, which insensibly develops into the long argument on the Republic or Ideal State, in which alone justice and the happy life are perfectly typed. Condemned to drink the hemlock «for corrupting the youth,» he spends the last hours in prison beguiling the grief of his distracted disciples with high disputations touching the immortality of the soul, striving

«—to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind, that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook.»

The style is as various as are the themes. It ranges from homely Socratic parable and the simple exquisite urbanity of Attic conversation to the subtlest metaphysical disquisition, the loftiest flights of poetic eloquence, the most dithyrambic imaginative mysticism. The only limitation of this universality which the critics of antiquity could discover was the failure (in the ‹Menexenus,› for example) to achieve sustained formal eloquence of the Demosthenic type. The thought was too curious and subtle, the expression charged with too many minor intentions, for that; the peculiar blending, in the Platonic diction, of colloquialism, dialectic precision, vivid imagination, and the tone of mystic unction, unfitted it for the conventional effects of political oratory.

But no other prose writer manifests such complete and easy mastery of every note in the compass of his idiom as Plato possesses over the resources of Greek. He not only employs all styles separately at will, but modulates from one to the other by insensible transitions, that can be compared only to the effects of modern music. Platonic prose is an orchestral accompaniment of the thought; suggesting for every *nuance* of the idea its appropriate mood, and shot through with *leitmotifs* of reminiscence and anticipation, that bind the whole into emotional and artistic unity. He is not only the greatest but the first artist of an elaborate and curiously wrought prose diction. No writer before him had thus combined quotation, parody, literary and historic allusion, idiom, proverb, dialect, continued metaphor, and the dramatically appropriated technical vocabularies of all arts, sciences, and professions,— to one resultant literary effect suited to his various meanings and moods. The nice finish of Demosthenes's comparatively simple oratorical prose was the outcome from a long evolution, and from the labors of three generations of orators and rhetoricians. The composite, suggestive, polychromatic, literary prose which is the ideal of the cleverest modern writers, was created, in its perfection and without precedent, by the genius of Plato.

The reconstruction of a systematic philosophy for Plato must be left, in his own words, to «some very clever and laborious but not altogether enviable man.» The notorious doctrine of Ideas is a language, a metaphysic, a mythology. «Socrates used to ask concerning each *thing*,— as justice, friendship, or the State,— What is it?» And so in the minor dialogues of search, the definition pursued through many a dialectical winding in the dramatization of elementary logic came to be regarded as a real thing to be apprehended, and not as the mere «statement of the connotation of a term.» «The naïve childish realism of the immature mind!» will be the confident comment of the hasty critic. But as against the deeper meaning of Plato such criticism is competent only to those, if any there be, who have completely solved the problem of the true nature of Universals. The mediæval controversy still subsists under manifold disguises; and in the last resort, as Professor James picturesquely says, «introspective psychology is forced to throw up the sponge.» We may classify the doctrine of Ideas as «logical realism»; but if we remember the kind of reality which Berkeley, Kant, Schopenhauer, Shelley, and the most delicate psychological analysis concur in attributing to the «things» of common-sense, which Plato called shadows and copies of the ideas, we may well surmise that the Platonic doctrine is more nearly akin to modern psychological and poetical idealism than to the crude logical realism of the Middle Ages. The verification of this conjecture would take us too far afield. It is enough that general notions, forms, essences, purposes, ideals, are in a sense as real as brick and mortar. For Plato they are the supreme realities. The idea of a thing, its form, identifying aspect, purpose, and true function,— these, and not its material embodiment and perishable accidents, are what concern us. The very workman who makes a tool does not copy with Chinese fidelity the accidents of an individual pattern, but is guided by an idea of a service or function which in the last analysis determines both material and form. Similarly the Divine Artist may be said to have created the world by stamping, in the limits of necessity, upon rude and shapeless chaos the informing types of harmonious order and his own beneficent designs. Lastly we may transfer the analogy to the social life of man, and say that the true educator, statesman, and ruler, is he whose soul has risen to the apprehension of fixed eternal norms of virtue, law, the ideal city, the perfectly just man,—and who has the power to mold and fashion as nearly as may be to the likeness of these ideal types, the imperfectly plastic human material—the «social tissue»—in which he works.

Thus the theory of ideas is a high poetic language, consistently employed to affirm the precedence of soul, form, ideal, reason, and design, over matter, body, and the accidents, irrelevancies, imperfections, and necessary compromises, of concrete physical existence.

«For Soul is Form, and doth the body make.»

From this it is but a step to the imaginative mythological personification of the ideas. They are beautiful shapes, almost persons, first beheld by the soul in pre-natal vision, and now in life's stormy voyage, ever fleeting before us «down the waste waters day and night,» or gleaming «like virtue firm, like knowledge fair,» through the mists that encompass the vessel's prow. So conceived, they provide a ready explanation or evasion of all the final problems which Plato was both unwilling and unable to answer in the sense of an unflinching materialistic nominalism. Our instantaneous *a priori* recognition of mathematical truth, the shaping of the vague chaos of sensation in predetermined molds of thought, the apprehension of norms of experience to which no finite experience ever conforms, our intuitions of a beauty, a goodness, a truth, transcending anything that earth can show, our persistent devotion to ideals that actual life always disappoints, our postulates of a perfection that rebukes and shames our practice,—what can these things mean save that all which we call knowledge here is a faint and troubled reminiscence of the Divine reality once seen face to face, a refraction of the white light of eternity by life's dome of many-colored glass, a sequence of shadow pictures cast on the further wall of the dim cavern in which we sit pinioned, our eyes helplessly averted from the true Light of the World?

But Plato does not, like the pseudo-Platonists, abandon himself to dreaming ecstasy. The theory of Ideas in its practical effect is a doctrine of the strenuous definition and application to life of regulative ideals. The multitude who lack such guiding aims live the «untested life» which Socrates pronounced intolerable. The so-called statesmen who fail to achieve them are blind leaders of the blind. The establishment in the mind of a clearly defined ethical and social ideal, as a touchstone of the tendencies of all particular acts and policies, is described in the language of poetical Platonism as the acquisition of the highest knowledge, the knowledge of the Idea of Good, on which the value of all partial and relative «goods» depends. The Idea of Good, supreme in the hierarchy of ideas, and last reached in the scale and process of pure dialectic, is the sun of the intelligible world; and like its symbol, the visible sun, is not only the fountain of light and knowledge, but the source of motion, life, and existence. For — to translate the image into prose — institutions, laws, and systems of government and education have their origin and find their best explanation in the final purposes, the ultimate ethical and social ideals, of their founders and supporters. But the knowledge of the Idea of Good, though described as a vision, is not granted to visionaries. The relation of all action to a rational and consistent theory of practice presupposes a severe discipline in dialectic. And dialectic itself, so confusing and unsettling as practiced in imitation of Socrates and the Sophists by the irresponsible youth of Athens, may be safely studied only after a long preparatory training in all the culture and exact science of the age. Only to the elect few, who, triumphantly supporting these and many other tests of mind and body, attain the beatific vision, will Plato intrust the government of his perfect city and the guardianship of mankind. They represent for him the antithesis of the typical pettifoggers and brawling demagogues of the Athens that was «dying of the triumph of the liberal party.» For these too he shapes, in many of the dialogues, a theory of unscrupulous cynical practice more coherent, doubtless, than anything in their minds, but serving in a way as an ideal of evil to oppose to his own idea or ideal of good. It has been affirmed that Plato was a bad citizen because he despaired of the Republic. But if we remember that, as Matthew Arnold says, Plato was right and Athens was doomed, if we recall the excesses of the post-Periclean demagogues, if we reflect on his bitter disillusionment in the brief tyrannical rule of the «good-and-fair» companions of his youth, we shall not censure him for «standing aside under a wall in a storm of dust and hurricane of driving wind,» or seeking refuge in the «city of which a pattern is laid up in heaven.» «He was born to other politics.»

Platonism is much more than this doctrine of Ideas, or than any doctrine. The dialogues, apart from their dramatic interest and literary charm, make a manifold appeal to numerous abiding instincts and aptitudes of the human mind through dialectics, metaphysics, mysticism, and æsthetic and ethical enthusiasm. Some hard-headed readers will use them as an intellectual gymnastic. The thrust and parry of logical fence, the close pursuit of a trail of ratiocination through all the windings and apparently capricious digressions of the argument, the ingenious *détours* and surprises of the Socratic

Elenchus, the apparatus of definitions, divisions, and fine-spun distinctions,—these things are in themselves a pleasurable exercise to many minds. Others seek in the dialogues the gratification of that commonplace metaphysical instinct which Walter Pater warns us to suppress. Being and non-Being, the One and the many, the finite and the infinite, weave their endless dance through the ‹Parmenides,› the ‹Sophist,› and the ‹Philebus.› We may say that it is barren logomachy, the ratiocinative faculty run to seed, if we will. The history of literature proves it what Plato called it: a persistent affection of discourse of reason in man. Certain Platonic dialogues exercise and gratify this instinct even more completely than Neo-Platonism, mediæval scholasticism, Hegelianism, or the new psychological scholasticism of to-day. And so, to the amazement and disgust of the positivists, the stream of *résumés*, new interpretations, and paraphrases of the ‹Sophist› and ‹Parmenides,› flows and will continue to flow.

Mysticism too «finds in Plato all its texts.» The yearning towards an Absolute One, ineffable symbol of the unity which the soul is ever striving to recover amid the dispersions of life, the impulse to seek a spiritual counterpart for every material fact, the tantalizing glimpses of infinite vistas beyond the ken of the bodily eye, the aspirations that elude definition, and refuse to be shut in a formula,—to all these

> «Fallings from us, vanishings,
> Blank misgivings of a creature
> Moving about in worlds not realized,»

Plato gives full recognition, while shunning with unerring tact their concrete superstitious developments. His mystical imagery is always embroidered on a definite framework of thought. The attributes of the Absolute One are deduced as systematically as a table of logical categories. The structure of a Greek temple is not more transparently symmetrical than the allegory of the sun and the Idea of Good, the analogy of the divided line, and the symbolism of the Cave in the ‹Republic›; or than the description, in the ‹Phædrus,› of the soul as a celestial car, of which reason is the charioteer, and noble passion and sensuous appetite are the two steeds. The visions of judgment that close the ‹Republic› and ‹Gorgias› are as definite in outline as a picture of Polygnotus. All nobler forms of mystic symbolism, from Plotinus to Emerson, derive from Plato; all its baser developments, from Iamblichus to the newest thaumaturgic theosophy, seek shelter under his name.

Allied to mysticism is the quality which the eighteenth century deprecated as enthusiasm. The intellect is suffused with feeling. All the nobler sentiments partake of the intensity of passionate love and the solemnity of initiations. Hence the sage and serious doctrine of Platonic love, whose interpretation and history would demand a volume:—

«Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar.»

All noble unrest and higher aspiration in this world is a striving to recapture something of the rapture of the soul's pre-natal vision of the Divine ideas. Now the good and the true are apprehended dimly through the abstractions of dialectic. The idea of beauty alone finds a not wholly inadequate visible embodiment on earth. And so the love of beauty is the predestined guide to the knowledge of the good and the true. In the presence of the beautiful the soul is stung by recollection of the Idea, and yearns for an immortality which the mortal can put on only through generation. To this throe, this yearning, awakened by the sight of a beautiful body, men give the special name love. But love in the larger sense is all passionate thirst for happiness, all thrilling recollection of the absolute beauty, all desire to reproduce it on earth, not merely after the flesh, but in such immortal children of the spirit as the poems of Homer and Sappho, the laws of Solon and Lycurgus, the victories of Epaminondas.

«The noble heart that harbors virtuous thought,
And is with child of glorious great intent,
Can never rest, until it forth have brought
Th' eternal brood of glory excellent.»

For this higher love the lower is a preparation and an initiation.

Akin to this enthusiasm of the lover is the fine frenzy of the poet, who, by visitation of the Muse, is inspired to utter many strange and beautiful sayings, of which he can render no account under a Socratic cross-examination. This power of the Muse resembles the magnet, which both attracts and imparts its attractive virtue to other substances. And when a vast audience thrills with terror and pity as the rhapsode, tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect, recites the sorrows of Priam or Hecuba, they are all dependent links in the magnetic chain that descends from the poet and the Muse.

The ‹Vita Nuova› of Dante, the sonnets of Michael Angelo, the ‹Eroici Furori› of Bruno, the spiritual quality of the higher poetry of the Italian and English Renaissance, and the more recent names of Shelley, Wordsworth, and Emerson, faintly indicate the historic influence of these beautiful conceptions.

In later years Plato's «enthusiasm» was transmuted into a prophetic puritanic world-reforming temper,— the seeming antithesis of this gracious philosophy of love and beauty. His work was from the beginning as intensely moralized as were the discourses of Socrates. On whatever theme you talked with Socrates, it was said, you would in the end be forced to render an account of the state of your soul. And so in Plato every text is improved for edification, «the moral properties and scope of things» are kept constantly in sight, and the unfailing ethical suggestiveness of the style intensifies the moral sentiment to a pitch of spiritual exaltation that makes of Platonism one of the great religions of the world. But the age as we see it in Thucydides, Aristophanes, and Euripides, was one of «enlightenment,» skepticism, and the breaking up of traditional moral restraints. And as he watched year by year the deterioration of the Athenian civic temper, and the triumph of the mocking spirit of denial, Plato's passionate concern for the moral side of life developed into something akin to the temper of the Hebrew prophet, preaching righteousness to a stubborn and perverse generation, or the modern Utopian reformer, dashing his angry heart against the corruptions of the world. The problems which increasingly absorb his attention are the disengagement from outworn forms of the saving truths of the old religion and morality, the polemic defense of this fundamental truth against the new Spirit of the Age, and the salvation of society by a reconstitution of education and a reconstruction of government.

These are the chief problems, again, of our own age of transition; and the 'Republic,' in which they find their ripest and most artistic treatment, might seem a book of yesterday — or to-morrow. The division of labor, specialization, the formation of a trained standing army, the limitation of the right of private property, the industrial and political equality of women, the improvement of the human breed by artificial selection, the omnipotence of public opinion, the reform of the letter of the creeds to save their spirit, the proscription of unwholesome art and literature, the reorganization of education, the kindergarten method, the distinction between higher and secondary education, the endowment of research, the application of the higher mathematics to astronomy and physics,— such are some of the divinations, the modernisms of that wonderful work. The framework is a confutation of ethical skepticism by demonstration that morality is of the nature of things, and the just life is intrinsically happier than the unjust. The nature of justice can be studied only in the larger life of the State. A typical Greek city is constructed,— or rather, allowed to grow,— and by the reform of education is insensibly transformed into the ideal monarchy or aristocracy, governed by philosopher-statesmen who have attained to the Idea of Good. The existing degenerate forms of government are reviewed, and estimated by their approximation to this perfect type; and by means of an elaborate psychological parallel between the individual and the social constitution, it is inferred that the superior happiness of the «just man» is proportional to the perfection of the best city.

The puritanic temper reveals itself in the famous banishment of Homer. In the course of a criticism of Greek anthropomorphism, which was repeated almost verbatim by the Christian fathers, the tales told of the gods by Homer are deprecated as unsuitable for the ears of the young. As his conception of education broadens, Socrates unfolds the Wordsworthian idea of the molding influence upon character of noble rhythms, and a beautiful and seemly environment of nature and art; and ordains that in the perfect city all art and literature must be of a quality to produce this ennobling effect. Lastly, recurring to the topic with deeper analysis in the closing book, he rejects all forms of dramatic, flamboyant, luscious art and literature, as superficial mimicries twice removed from absolute truth, unwholesome stimulants of emotion, and nurses of harmful illusions. We may not, with Ruskin, pronounce this a quenching of the imagination and of the poetic sensibilities by the excess of the logical faculty. Plato is only too conscious of the siren's charm:—«And thou too, dear friend, dost thou not own her spell, and most especially when she comes in the guise of Homer? But great is the prize for which we strive; and what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world of poetry and art, and lose his own soul?»

«But all those pleasant bowers and palace brave
Guyon broke down with rigor pitiless,
Ne aught their goodly workmanship might save
Them from the tempest of his wrathfulness.»

The ‹Republic› undertakes to prove that virtue is its own reward, and needs no other wage here or hereafter. But at the close the imperious human cry makes itself heard: «Give her the wages of going on, and not to die.» The beautiful tale of salvation related by Er the son of Armenius is like the myth at the close of the ‹Gorgias›; and the description of the blissful region of the «upper earth» in the ‹Phædo› rather an «intimation of immortality» than a cogent logical demonstration. Plato sketches many such proofs: the soul possesses concepts not derived from experience; the soul is an uncomposite unity; the soul is a spontaneous source of motion. But like the myths, these arguments are rather tentative expressions of a rational hope than dogmatic affirmations or organic members of a system. Yet the traditional conception of Plato as the champion of immortality and the truths of natural religion, is justified by the fact that in the age when traditional religion first found itself confronted with the affirmations of dogmatic science, and with the picture of a mechanical universe that left no place for God or the soul,—he, at home in both worlds of thought, stood forward as a mediator, and demonstrated this much at least: that a purely sensationist psychology fails to yield an intelligible account of mind, and that the dogmatism of negation is as baseless as the dogmatism of unlicensed affirmation.

Space does not admit even a sketch of the history of the Platonic dialogues, and their domination of the thought of intensely vital ages, like the Renaissance and our own time. Their influence in literature, philosophy, and the higher education, has perhaps never been greater than in the past thirty years. No original book of this generation has done more to shape the thought of our time than Jowett's admirable translation, accompanied by notes and analyses. This translation, with Grote's elaborate study in four volumes, Zeller's ‹History of Greek Philosophy,› Campbell's excellent article in the ‹Encyclopædia Britannica,› and Walter Pater's exquisite ‹Plato and Platonism,› will meet all the needs of the general student. The latest edition of Zeller will guide scholars to the enormous technical literature of the subject.

Paul Shorey

FROM THE ‹PROTAGORAS›

[Socrates and his young friend Hippocrates visit the Sophists' school.]

I PROCEEDED: Is not a Sophist, Hippocrates, one who deals wholesale or retail in the food of the soul? To me that appears to be the sort of man.

And what, Socrates, is the food of the soul?

Surely, I said, knowledge is the food of the soul; and we must take care, my friend, that the Sophist does not deceive us when he praises what he sells, like the dealers wholesale or retail who sell the food of the body: for they praise indiscriminately all their goods, without knowing what are really beneficial or hurtful; neither do their customers know, with the exception of any trainer or physician who may happen to buy of them. In like manner those who carry about the wares of knowledge, and make the round of the cities, and sell or retail them to any customer who is in want of them, praise them all alike: and I should not wonder, O my friend, if many of them were really ignorant of their effect upon the soul; and their customers equally ignorant, unless he who buys of them happens to be a physician of the soul. If therefore you have understanding of what is good and evil, you may safely buy knowledge of Protagoras, or of any one; but if not, then, O my friend, pause, and do not hazard your dearest interests at a game of chance. For there is far greater peril in buying knowledge than in buying meat and drink: the one you purchase of the wholesale or retail dealer, and carry them away in other vessels, and before you receive them into the body as food you may deposit them at home, and call in any experienced friend who knows what is good to be eaten or drunken, and what not, and how much and when; and hence the danger of purchasing them is not so great. But when you buy the wares of knowledge you cannot carry them away in another vessel; they have been sold to you, and you must take them into the soul and go your way, either greatly harmed or greatly benefited by the lesson: and therefore we should think about this and take counsel with our elders; for we are still young — too young to determine such a matter. And now let us go, as we were intending, and hear Protagoras: and when we have heard what he has to say, we may take counsel of others; for not only is Protagoras at the house of Callias, but there is Hippias of Elis, and if I am not mistaken, Prodicus of Ceos, and several other wise men.

To this we agreed, and proceeded on our way until we reached the vestibule of the house; and there we stopped in order to finish a dispute which had arisen as we were going along; and we stood talking in the vestibule until we had finished and come to an understanding. And I think that the doorkeeper, who was a eunuch, and who was probably annoyed at the great inroad of the Sophists, must have heard us talking. At any rate, when we knocked at the door, and he opened and saw us, he grumbled, They are Sophists — he is not at home; and instantly gave the door a hearty bang with both his hands. Again we knocked, and he answered without opening, Did you not hear me say that he is not at home, fellows? But, my friend, I said, we are not Sophists, and we are not come to see Callias: fear not, for we want to see Protagoras; and I must request you to announce us. At last, after a good deal of difficulty, the man was persuaded to open the door.

When we entered, we found Protagoras taking a walk in the portico; and next to him on one side were walking Callias the son of Hipponicus, and Paralus the son of Pericles, who by the mother's side is his half-brother, and Charmides the son of Glaucon. On the other side of him were Xanthippus the other son of Pericles, Philippides the son of Philomelus; also Antimœrus of Mende, who of all the disciples of Protagoras is the most famous, and intends to make sophistry his profession. A train of listeners followed him, of whom the greater part appeared to be foreigners, who accompanied Protagoras out of the various cities through which he journeyed. Now he, like Orpheus, attracted them by his voice, and they followed the attraction. I should mention also that there were some Athenians in the company. Nothing delighted me more than the precision of their movements: they never got into his way at all; but when he and those who were with him turned back, then the band of listeners divided into two parts on either side; he was always in front, and they wheeled round and took their places behind him in perfect order.

After him, as Homer says, «I lifted up my eyes and saw» Hippias the Elean, sitting in the opposite portico on a chair of state, and around him were seated on benches Eryximachus the son of Acumenus, and Phædrus the Myrrhinusian, and Andron the son of Androtion, and there were strangers whom he had brought with him from his native city of Elis, and some others: they appeared to be asking Hippias certain physical and astronomical questions, and he, ex cathedrâ, was determining their several questions to them, and discoursing of them.

Also, «my eyes beheld Tantalus»; for Prodicus the Cean was at Athens: he had been put into a room which in the days of Hipponicus was a storehouse; but as the house was full, Callias had cleared this out and made the room into a guest-chamber. Now Prodicus was still in bed, wrapped up in sheepskins and bedclothes, of which there seemed to be a great heap; and there were sitting by him on the couches near, Pausanias of the deme of Cerameis, and with Pausanias was a youth quite young, who is certainly remarkable for his good looks, and if I am not mistaken, is also of a fair and gentle nature. I think that I heard him called Agathon, and my suspicion is that he is the beloved of Pausanias. There was this youth, and also there were the two Adeimantuses,—one the son of Cepis, and the other of

Leucolophides,—and some others. I was very anxious to hear what Prodicus was saying, for he seemed to me to be an extraordinarily wise and divine man; but I was not able to get into the inner circle, and his fine deep voice made an echo in the room which rendered his words inaudible.

No sooner had we entered than there followed us Alcibiades the beautiful—as you say, and I believe you; and also Critias the son of Callæschrus.

On entering, we stopped a little in order to look about us, and then walked up to Protagoras, and I said: Protagoras, my friend Hippocrates and I have come to see you.

Do you wish, he said, to speak with me alone, or in the presence of others?

That is as you please, I said: you shall determine when you have heard the object of our visit.

And what is that? he said.

I must explain, I said, that my friend Hippocrates is a native Athenian; he is the son of Apollodorus, and of a great and prosperous house, and he is himself in natural ability quite a match for those of his own age. I believe that he aspires to political eminence; and this he thinks that conversation with you is most likely to procure for him: now it is for you to decide whether you would wish to speak to him of these matters alone or in company.

Thank you, Socrates, for your consideration of me. For certainly a stranger finding his way into great cities, and persuading the flower of the youth in them to leave the company of their other kinsmen or acquaintance, and live with him, under the idea that they will be improved by his conversation, ought to be very cautious: great jealousies are occasioned by his proceedings, and he is the subject of many enmities and conspiracies. I maintain the art of the Sophist to be of ancient date; but that in ancient times the professors of the art, fearing this odium, veiled and disguised themselves under various names; some under that of poets, as Homer, Hesiod, and Simonides; some as hierophants and prophets, as Orpheus and Musæus; and some, as I observe, even under the name of gymnastic-masters, like Iccus of Tarentum, or the more recently celebrated Herodicus, now of Selymbria and formerly of Megara, who is a first-rate Sophist. Your own Agathocles pretended to be a musician, but was really an eminent Sophist; also Pythocleides the Cean; and there were many others: and all of them, as I was saying, adopted these arts as veils or disguises because they were afraid of the envy of the multitude. But that is not my way: for I do not believe that they effected their purpose, which was to deceive the government, who were not blinded by them; and as to the people, they have no understanding, and only repeat what their rulers are pleased to tell them. Now to run away, and to be caught in running away, is the very height of folly; and also greatly increases the exasperation of mankind, for they regard him who runs away as a rogue, in addition to any other objection which they have to him: and therefore I take an entirely opposite course, and acknowledge myself to be a Sophist and instructor of mankind; such an open acknowledgment appears to me to be a better sort of caution than concealment Nor do I neglect other precautions; and therefore I hope, as I may say, by the favor of heaven, that no harm will come of the acknowledgment that I am a Sophist. And I have been now many years in the profession;—for all my years when added up are many, and there is no one here present of whom I might not be the father. Wherefore I should much prefer conversing with you, if you do not object, in the presence of the company.

As I suspected that he would like to have a little display and glory in the presence of Prodicus and Hippias, and would gladly show us to them in the light of his admirers, I said: But why should we not summon Prodicus and Hippias and their friends to hear us?

Very good, he said.

Suppose, said Callias, that we hold a council in which you may sit and discuss. This was determined, and great delight was felt at the prospect of hearing wise men talk; we ourselves all took the chairs and benches, and arranged them by Hippias, where the other benches had been already placed. Meanwhile Callias and Alcibiades got up Prodicus, and brought in him and his companions.

When we were all seated, Protagoras said: Now that the company are assembled, Socrates, tell me about the young man of whom you were just now speaking.

FROM THE ‹PHÆDO›

[Socrates, concluding his mythical account of the soul's future state, prepares for death.]

I do not mean to affirm that the description which I have given of the soul and her mansions is exactly true: a man of sense ought hardly to say that. But I do say that inasmuch as the soul is shown to be immortal, he may venture to think, not improperly or unworthily, that something of the kind is true. The venture is a glorious one, and he ought to comfort himself with words like these, which is the reason why I lengthen out the tale. Wherefore, I say, let a man be of good cheer about his soul who has cast away the pleasures and ornaments of the body as alien to him, and rather hurtful in their effect, and has followed after the pleasures of knowledge in this life; who has adorned the soul in her own proper jewels, which are temperance, and justice, and courage, and nobility, and truth: in these arrayed she is ready to go on her journey to the world below, when her time comes. You, Simmias and Cebes, and all other men, will depart at some time or other. Me already, as the tragic poet would say, the voice of Fate calls. Soon I must drink the poison; and I think that I had better repair to the bath first, in order that the women may not have the trouble of washing my body after I am dead.

When he had done speaking, Crito said: And have you any commands for us, Socrates — anything to say about your children, or any other matter in which we can serve you?

Nothing particular, he said: only, as I have always told you, I would have you to look to yourselves; that is a service which you may always be doing to me and mine as well as to yourselves. And you need not make professions; for if you take no thought for yourselves, and walk not according to the precepts which I have given you,— not now for the first time,— the warmth of your professions will be of no avail.

We will do our best, said Crito. But in what way would you have us bury you?

In any way that you like; only you must get hold of me, and take care that I do not walk away from you. Then he turned to us, and added with a smile: I cannot make Crito believe that I am the same Socrates who have been talking and conducting the argument; he fancies that I am the other Socrates whom he will soon see,—a dead body,—and he asks, How shall he bury me? And though I have spoken many words in the endeavor to show that when I have drunk the poison I shall leave you and go to the joys of the blessed,—these words of mine with which I comforted you and myself have had, as I perceive, no effect upon Crito. And therefore I want you to be surety for me now, as he was surety for me at the trial; but let the promise be of another sort: for he was my surety to the judges that I would remain, but you must be my surety to him that I shall not remain, but go away and depart; and then he will suffer less at my death, and not be grieved when he sees my body being burned or buried. I would not have him sorrow at my hard lot, or say at the burial, Thus we lay out Socrates, or, Thus we follow him to the grave or bury him; for false words are not only evil in themselves, but they infect the soul with evil. Be of good cheer then, my dear Crito; and say that you are burying my body only, and do with that as is usual, and as you think best.

When he had spoken these words, he arose and went into the bath-chamber with Crito, who bid us wait; and we waited, talking and thinking of the subject of discourse, and also of the greatness of our sorrow,—he was like a father of whom we were being bereaved, and we were about to pass the rest of our lives as orphans. When he had taken the bath, his children were brought to him (he had two young sons and an elder one); and the women of his family also came, and he talked to them and gave them a few directions in the presence of Crito: and he then dismissed them and returned to us.

Now the hour of sunset was near, for a good deal of time had passed while he was within. When he came out, he sat down with us again after his bath, but not much was said. Soon the jailer, who was the servant of the eleven, entered and stood by him, saying: To you, Socrates, whom I know to be the noblest and gentlest and best of all who ever came to this place, I will not impute the angry feelings of other men, who rage and swear at me when, in obedience to the authorities, I bid them drink the poison: indeed I am sure that you will not be angry with me; for others, as you are aware, and not I, are the guilty cause. And so fare you well, and try to bear lightly what must needs be; you know my errand. Then bursting into tears he turned away and went out.

Socrates looked at him and said: I return your good wishes, and will do as you bid. Then turning to us, he said, How charming the man is!—since I have been in prison he has always been coming to see me, and at times he would talk to me, and was as good as could be to me, and now see how generously he sorrows for me. But we must do as he says, Crito; let the cup be brought, if the poison is prepared: if not, let the attendant prepare some.

Yet, said Crito, the sun is still upon the hill-tops; and many a one has taken the draught late, and after the announcement has been made to him, he has eaten and drunk, and indulged in sensual delights; do not hasten then—there is still time.

Socrates said: Yes, Crito, and they of whom you speak are right in doing thus, for they think they will gain by the delay, but I am right in not doing thus, for I do not think that I should gain anything by drinking the poison a little later; I should be sparing and saving a life which is already gone: I could only laugh at myself for this. Please then to do as I say, and not to refuse me.

Crito, when he heard this, made a sign to the servant; and the servant went in, and remained for some time, and then returned with the jailer carrying the cup of poison. Socrates said: You, my good friend, who are experienced in these matters, shall give me directions how I am to proceed. The man answered: You have only to walk about until your legs are heavy, and then lie down and the poison will act. At the same time he handed the cup to Socrates, who in the easiest and gentlest manner, without the least fear or change of color or feature, looking at the man with all his eyes, Echecrates, as his manner was, took the cup and said: What do you say about making a libation out of this cup to any god? May I, or not? The man answered: We only prepare, Socrates, just so much as we deem enough. I understand, he said; yet I may and must pray to the gods to prosper my journey from this to that other world; may this then, which is my prayer, be granted to me. Then holding the cup to his lips, quite readily and cheerfully he drank off the poison. And hitherto most of us had been able to control our sorrow; but now when we saw him drinking, and saw too that he had finished the draught, we could no longer forbear, and in spite of myself my own tears were flowing fast; so that I covered my face and wept over myself,—for certainly I was not weeping over him, but at the thought of my own calamity in having lost such a companion. Nor was I the first: Crito, when he found himself unable to restrain his tears, had got up and moved away, and I followed; and at that moment, Apollodorus, who had been weeping all the time, broke out into a loud cry, which made cowards of us all. Socrates alone retained his calmness: What is this strange outcry? he said. I sent away the women mainly in order that they might not offend in this way; for I have heard that a man should die in peace. Be quiet then, and have patience. When we heard that, we were ashamed, and refrained our tears; and he walked about until, as he said, his legs began to fail, and then he lay on his back, according to the directions: and the man who gave him the poison now and then looked at his feet and legs; and after a while he pressed his foot hard and asked him if he could feel; and he said No; and then his leg, and so upwards and upwards, and showed us that he was cold and stiff. And he felt them himself, and said: When the poison reaches the heart, that will be the end. He was beginning to grow cold about the groin, when he uncovered his face, for he had covered himself up, and said (they were his last words) — he said: Crito, I owe a cock to Asclepius: will you remember to pay the debt? The debt shall be paid, said Crito: is there anything else? There was no answer to this question: but in a minute or two a movement was heard, and the attendants uncovered him; his eyes were set, and Crito closed his eyes and mouth.

Such was the end, Echecrates, of our friend, whom I may truly call the wisest and justest and best of all the men whom I have ever known.

FROM THE ‹APOLOGY›

[Remarks added by Socrates after his condemnation.]

AND now, O men who have condemned me, I would fain prophesy to you; for I am about to die, and that is the hour in which men are gifted with prophetic power. And I prophesy to you who are my murderers, that immediately after my death, punishment far heavier than you have inflicted on me will surely await you. Me you have killed because you wanted to escape the accuser, and not to give an account of your lives.

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But that will not be as you suppose: far otherwise. For I say that there will be more accusers of you than there are now; accusers whom hitherto I have restrained: and as they are younger they will be more severe with you, and you will be more offended at them. For if you think that by killing men you can avoid the accuser censuring your lives, you are mistaken; that is not a way of escape which is either possible or honorable: the easiest and the noblest way is not to be crushing others, but to be improving yourselves. This is the prophecy which I utter before my departure, to the judges who have condemned me.

Friends who would have acquitted me, I would like also to talk with you about this thing which has happened, while the magistrates are busy, and before I go to the place at which I must die. Stay then for a while; for we may as well talk with one another while there is time. You are my friends, and I should like to show you the meaning of this event which has happened to me. O my judges,—for you I may truly call judges,—I should like to tell you of a wonderful circumstance. Hitherto the familiar oracle within me has constantly been in the habit of opposing me even about trifles, if I was going to make a slip or error about anything; and now, as you see, there has come upon me that which may be thought, and is generally believed to be, the last and worst evil. But the oracle made no sign of opposition, either as I was leaving my house and going out in the morning, or when I was going up into this court, or while I was speaking, at anything which I was going to say; and yet I have often been stopped in the middle of a speech, but now in nothing I either said or did touching this matter has the oracle opposed me. What do I take to be the explanation of this? I will tell you. I regard this as a proof that what has happened to me is a good, and that those of us who think that death is an evil are in error. This is a great proof to me of what I am saying; for the customary sign would surely have opposed me had I been going to evil and not to good.

Let us reflect in another way, and we shall see that there is great reason to hope that death is a good, for one of two things: either death is a state of nothingness and utter unconsciousness, or as men say, there is a change and migration of the soul from this world to another. Now if you suppose that there is no consciousness, but a sleep like the sleep of him who is undisturbed even by the sight of dreams, death will be an unspeakable gain.

For if a person were to select the night in which his sleep was undisturbed even by dreams, and were to compare with this the other days and nights of his life, and then were to tell us how many days and nights he had passed in the course of his life better and more pleasantly than this one, I think that any man —I will not say a private man, but even the great king—will not find many such days or nights, when compared with the others. Now if death is like this, I say that to die is gain; for eternity is then only a single night. But if death is the journey to another place, and there, as men say, all the dead are, what good, O my friends and judges, can be greater than this? If indeed, when the pilgrim arrives in the world below, he is delivered from the professors of justice in this world, and finds the true judges who are said to give judgment there,—Minos and Rhadamanthus and Æacus and Triptolemus, and other sons of God who were righteous in their own life,—that pilgrimage will be worth making. What would not a man give if he might converse with Orpheus and Musæus and Hesiod and Homer? Nay, if this be true, let me die again and again. I too shall have a wonderful interest in a place where I can converse with Palamedes, and Ajax the son of Telamon, and other heroes of old, who have suffered death through an unjust judgment; and there will be no small pleasure, as I think, in comparing my own suffering with theirs. Above all, I shall be able to continue my search into true and false knowledge; as in this world, so also in that, I shall find out who is wise, and who pretends to be wise and is not. What would not a man give, O judges, to be able to examine the leader of the great Trojan expedition; or Odysseus or Sisyphus, or numberless others, men and women too! What infinite delight would there be in conversing with them and asking them questions! For in that world they do not put a man to death for this; certainly not. For besides being happier in that world than in this, they will be immortal, if what is said is true.

Wherefore, O judges, be of good cheer about death, and know this of a truth,—that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death. He and his are not neglected by the gods; nor has my own approaching end happened by mere chance. But I see clearly that to die and be released was better for me; and therefore the oracle gave no sign. For which reason, also, I am not angry with my accusers or my condemners;

they have done me no harm, although neither of them meant to do me any good; and for this I may gently blame them.

Still I have a favor to ask of them. When my sons are grown up, I would ask you, O my friends, to punish them; and I would have you trouble them, as I have troubled you, if they seem to care about riches, or anything, more than about virtue; or if they pretend to be something when they are really nothing, —then reprove them, as I have reproved you, for not caring about that for which they ought to care, and thinking that they are something when they are really nothing. And if you do this, I and my sons will have received justice at your hands.

The hour of departure has arrived; and we go our ways—I to die, and you to live. Which is better, God only knows.

FROM THE ‹PHÆDRUS›

[Mythic description of the soul.]

Enough of the Soul's immortality.

Her form is a theme of divine and large discourse; human language may however speak of this briefly, and in a figure. Let our figure be of a composite nature,—a pair of winged horses and a charioteer. Now the winged horses and the charioteer of the gods are all of them noble, and of noble breed, while ours are mixed: and we have a charioteer who drives them in a pair, and one of them is noble and of noble origin, and the other is ignoble and of ignoble origin; and as might be expected, there is a great deal of trouble in managing them. I will endeavor to explain to you in what way the mortal differs from the immortal creature. The soul or animate being has the care of the inanimate, and traverses the whole heaven in divers forms appearing; when perfect and fully winged she soars upward, and is the ruler of the universe: while the imperfect soul loses her feathers, and drooping in her flight, at last settles on the solid ground; there, finding a home, she receives an earthly frame which appears to be self-moved, but is really moved by her power: and this composition of soul and body is called a living and mortal creature. For no such union can be reasonably believed, or at all proved, to be other than mortal; although fancy may imagine a god, whom, not having seen nor surely known, we invent,—such a one, an immortal creature having a body and having also a soul, which have been united in all time. Let that, however, be as God wills, and be spoken of acceptably to him. But the reason why the soul loses her feathers should be explained, and is as follows:—

The wing is intended to soar aloft and carry that which gravitates downward, into the upper region which is the dwelling of the gods; and this is that element of the body which is most akin to the divine. Now the divine is beauty, wisdom, goodness, and the like: and by these the wing of the soul is nourished, and grows apace; but when fed upon evil and foulness, and the like, wastes and falls away. Zeus, the mighty lord holding the reins of a winged chariot, leads the way in heaven, ordering all and caring for all; and there follows him the heavenly array of gods and demigods, divided into eleven bands: for only Hestia is left at home in the house of heaven; but the rest of the twelve greater deities march in their appointed order. And they see in the interior of heaven many blessed sights: and there are ways to and fro, along which the happy gods are passing, each one fulfilling his own work; and any one may follow who pleases, for jealousy has no place in the heavenly choir. This is within the heaven. But when they go to feast and festival, then they move right up the steep ascent, and mount the top of the dome of heaven. Now the chariots of the gods, self-balanced, upward glide in obedience to the rein; but the others have a difficulty, for the steed who has evil in him, if he has not been properly trained by the charioteer, gravitates and inclines and sinks towards the earth; and this is the hour of agony and extremest conflict of the soul. For the immortal souls, when they are at the end of their course, go out and stand upon the back of heaven, and the revolution of the spheres carries them round, and they behold the world beyond. Now of the heaven which is above the heavens, no earthly poet has sung or ever will sing in a worthy manner. But I must tell, for I am bound to speak truly when speaking of the truth. The colorless and formless and intangible essence is visible to the mind, which is the only lord of the soul. Circling around this in the region above the heavens is the place of true knowledge. And as the divine intelligence, and that of every other soul which is rightly nourished, is fed upon mind and pure knowledge, such an intelligent soul is glad at once more beholding Being; and feeding on the sight of truth, is replenished, until the revolution of the worlds brings her round again to the same place. During the revolution she beholds justice, temperance, and knowledge absolute, not in the form of generation or of relation, which men call existence, but knowledge absolute in existence absolute; and beholding other existences in like manner, and feeding upon them, she passes down into the interior of the heavens and returns home; and there the charioteer, putting up his horses at the stall, gives them ambrosia to eat and nectar to drink.

This is the life of the gods: but of the other souls, that which follows God best and is likest to him lifts the head of the charioteer into the outer world, and is carried round in the revolution, troubled indeed by the steeds, and beholding true being, but hardly; another rises and falls, and sees, and again fails to see by reason of the unruliness of the steeds. The rest of the souls are also longing after the upper world, and they all follow, but not being strong enough, they sink into the gulf as they are carried round, plunging, treading on one another, striving to be first; and there is confusion and the extremity of effort, and many of them are lamed or have their wings broken through the ill driving of the charioteers; and all of them after a fruitless toil go away without being initiated into the mysteries of being, and are nursed with the food of opinion. The reason of their great desire to behold the plain of truth is, that the food which is suited to the highest part of the soul comes out of that meadow; and the wing on which the soul soars is nourished with this. And there is a law of the goddess Retribution, that the soul which attains any vision of truth in company with the god is preserved from harm until the next period, and he who always attains is always unharmed. But when she is unable to follow, and fails to behold the vision of truth, and through some ill-hap sinks beneath the double load of forgetfulness and vice, and her feathers fall from her, and she drops to earth,—then the law ordains that this soul shall in the first generation pass, not into that of any other animal, but only of man; and the soul which has seen most of truth shall come to the birth as a philosopher or artist, or musician or lover; that which has seen truth in the second degree shall be a righteous king or warrior or lord; the soul which is of the third class shall be a politician or economist or trader; the fourth shall be a lover of gymnastic toils or a physician; the fifth a prophet or hierophant; to the sixth a poet or imitator will be appropriate; to the seventh the life of an artisan or husbandman; to the eighth that of a sophist or demagogue; to the ninth that of a tyrant: all these are states of probation, in which he who lives righteously improves, and he who lives unrighteously deteriorates his lot.

Ten thousand years must elapse before the soul can return to the place from whence she came, for she cannot grow her wings in less: only the soul of a philosopher, guileless and true, or the soul of a lover, who is not without philosophy, may acquire wings in the third recurring period of a thousand years; and if they choose this life three times in succession, then they have their wings given them, and go away at the end of three thousand years. But the others receive judgment when they have completed their first life: and after the judgment they go, some of them to the houses of correction which are under the earth, and are punished; others to some place in heaven whither they are lightly borne by justice, and there they live in a manner worthy of the life which they led here when in the form of men. And at the end of the first thousand years, the good souls and also the evil souls both come to cast lots and choose their second life, and they may take any that they like. And then the soul of the man may pass into the life of a beast, or from the beast again into the man. But the soul of him who has never seen the truth will not pass into the human form, for man ought to have intelligence, as they say, "secundum speciem," proceeding from many particulars of sense to one conception or reason; and this is the recollection of those things which our soul once saw when in company with God — when looking down from above on that which we now call Being, and upwards towards the true Being. And therefore the mind of the philosopher alone has wings: and this is just; for he is always, according to the measure of his abilities, clinging in recollection to those things in which God abides, and in beholding which he is what he is. And he who employs aright these memories is ever being initiated into perfect mysteries, and alone becomes truly perfect. But as he forgets earthly interests, and is rapt in the divine, the vulgar deem him mad, and rebuke him: they do not see that he is inspired.

FROM THE ‹GORGIAS›

[Myth of the judgment of the dead.]

Listen then, as story-tellers say, to a very pretty tale, which I daresay that you may be disposed to regard as a fable only, but which, as I believe, is a true tale; for I mean, in what I am going to tell you, to speak the truth. Homer tells us how Zeus and Poseidon and Pluto divided the empire which they inherited from their father. Now in the days of Cronos there was this law respecting the destiny of man, which has always existed, and still continues in heaven: that he who has lived all his life in justice and holiness shall go, when he dies, to the islands of the blest, and dwell there in perfect happiness out of the reach of evil; but that he who has lived unjustly and impiously shall go to the house of vengeance and punishment, which is called Tartarus. And in the time of Cronos, and even later in the reign of Zeus, the judgment was given on the very day on which the men were to die; the judges were alive, and the men were alive: and the consequence was that the judgments were not well given. Then Pluto and the authorities from the islands of the blest came to Zeus, and said that the souls found their way to the wrong places. Zeus said:—«I shall put a stop to this: the judgments are not well given, and the reason is that the judged have their clothes on, for they are alive; and there are many having evil souls who are appareled in fair bodies, or wrapt round in wealth and rank, and when the day of judgment arrives, many witnesses come forward and witness on their behalf that they have lived righteously. The judges are awed by them, and they themselves too have their clothes on when judging: their eyes and ears and their whole bodies are interposed as a veil before their own souls. This all stands in the way: there are the clothes of the judges and the clothes of the judged. What is to be done? I will tell you: In the first place, I will deprive men of the foreknowledge of death, which they at present possess; that is a commission the execution of which I have already intrusted to Prometheus. In the second place, they shall be entirely stripped before they are judged, for they shall be judged when they are dead: and the judge too shall be naked, that is to say, dead; he with his naked soul shall pierce into the other naked soul as soon as each man dies, he knows not when, and is deprived of his kindred, and hath left his brave attire in the world above: and then judgment will be just. I knew all about this before you did, and therefore I have made my sons judges: two from Asia,—Minos and Rhadamanthus; and one from Europe,—Æacus. And these, when they are dead, shall judge in the meadow where three ways meet, and out of which two roads lead: one to the islands of the blessed, and the other to Tartarus. Rhadamanthus shall judge those who come from Asia, and Æacus those who come from Europe. And to Minos I shall give the primacy, and he shall hold a court of appeal in case either of the two others are in doubt: in this way the judgment respecting the last journey of men will be as just as possible."

This is a tale, Callicles, which I have heard and believed, and from which I draw the following inferences: Death, if I am right, is in the first place the separation from one another of two things, soul and body; this, and nothing else. And after they are separated they retain their several characteristics, which are much the same as in life; the body has the same nature and ways and affections, all clearly discernible. For example, he who by nature or training or both was a tall man while he was alive, will remain as he was after he is dead, and the fat man will remain fat, and so on; and the dead man who in life has a fancy to have flowing hair, will have flowing hair. And if he was marked with the whip and had the prints of the scourge or of wounds in him when he was alive, you might see the same in the dead body; and if his limbs were broken or misshapen when he was alive, the same appearance would be visible in the dead. And in a word, whatever was the habit of the body during life would be distinguishable after death, either perfectly, or in a great measure and for a time. And I should infer that this is equally true of the soul, Callicles: when a man is stripped of the body, all the natural or acquired affections of the soul are laid open to view. And when they come to the judge, as those from Asia came to Rhadamanthus, he places them near him and inspects them quite impartially, not knowing whose the soul is: perhaps he may lay hands on the soul of the great king, or of some other king or potentate, who has no soundness in him; but his soul is marked with the whip, and is full of the prints and scars of perjuries, and of wrongs which have been plastered into him by each action, and he is all crooked with falsehood and imposture, and has no straightness, because he has lived without truth. Him Rhadamanthus beholds, full of deformity and disproportion, which is caused by license and luxury and insolence and incontinence, and dispatches him ignominiously to his prison, and there he undergoes the punishment which he deserves.

Now the proper office of punishment is twofold: he who is rightly punished ought either to become better and profit by it, or he ought to be made an example to his fellows, that they may see what he suffers, and fear and become better. Those who are punished by gods and men, and improved, are those whose sins are curable: still the way of improving them, as in this world so also in another, is by pain and suffering; for there is no other way in which they can be delivered from their evil. But they who have been guilty of the worst crimes, and are incurable by reason of their crimes, are made examples; for, as they are incurable, the time has passed at which they can receive any benefit themselves. But others get good when they behold them forever enduring the most terrible and painful and fearful sufferings as the penalty of their sins; there they are, hanging up as examples, in the prison-house of the world below,—a spectacle and a warning to all unrighteous men who come thither. And most of those fearful examples, as I believe, are taken from the class of tyrants and kings and potentates and public men; for they are the authors of the greatest and most impious crimes, because they have the power. And Homer witnesses to the truth of this; for those whom he has described as suffering everlasting punishment in the world below are always kings and potentates;—there are Tantalus, and Sisyphus, and Tityus. But no one ever described Thersites, or any private person who was a villain, as suffering everlasting punishment because he was incurable. For to do as they did was, as I am inclined to think, not in his power; and he was happier than those who had the power. Yes, Callicles, the very bad men come from the class of those who have power. And yet, in that very class there may arise good men, and worthy of all admiration they are; for where there is great power to do wrong, to live and die justly is a hard thing, and greatly to be praised, and few there are who attain this. Such good and true men, however, there have been, and will be again, in this and other States, who have fulfilled their trust righteously; and there is one who is quite famous all over Hellas,—Aristides the son of Lysimachus. But in general, great men are also bad, my friend.

And as I was saying, Rhadamanthus, when he gets a soul of this kind, knows nothing about him, neither who he is nor who his parents are: he knows only that he has got hold of a villain; and seeing this, he stamps him as curable or incurable, and sends him away to Tartarus, whither he goes and receives his recompense. Or again, he looks with admiration on the soul of some just one who has lived in holiness and truth: he may have been a private man or not; and I should say, Callicles, that he is most likely to have been a philosopher who has done his own work, and not troubled himself with the doings of other men in his lifetime: him Rhadamanthus sends to the islands of the blest. Æacus does the same; and they both have sceptres, and judge; and Minos is seated, looking on, as Odysseus in Homer declares that he saw him,—

> "Holding a sceptre of gold, and giving laws to the dead."

Now I, Callicles, am persuaded of the truth of these things; and I consider how I shall present my soul whole and undefiled before the judge in that day. Renouncing the honors at which the world aims, I desire only to know the truth, and to live as well as I can; and when the time comes, to die. And to the utmost of my power, I exhort all other men to do the same. And in return for your exhortation of me, I exhort you also to take part in the great combat, which is the combat of life, and greater than every other earthly conflict. And I retort your reproach of me, and say that you will not be able to help yourself when the day of trial and judgment, of which I was speaking, comes upon you: you will go before the judge, the son of Ægina, and when you are in the hands of justice you will gape and your head will swim round, just as mine would in the courts of this world; and very likely some one will shamefully box you on the ears, and put upon you every sort of insult.

Perhaps this may appear to you to be only an old wife's tale, which you contemn. And there might be reason in your contemning such tales, if by searching we could find out anything better or truer: but now you see that you and Polus and Gorgias, who are the three wisest of the Greeks of our day, are not able to show that we ought to live any life which does not profit in another world as well as in this. And of all that has been said, nothing remains unshaken but the saying, that to do injustice is more to be avoided than to suffer injustice, and that the reality and not the appearance of virtue is to be followed above all things, as well in public as in private life; and that when any one has been wrong in anything, he is to be chastised; and that the next best thing to a man being just is, that he should become just, and be chastised and punished; also that he should avoid all flattery of himself as well as of others, of the few as of the many; and rhetoric and any other art should be used by him, and all his actions should be done, always with a view to justice.

FROM THE ‹REPUBLIC›

[The figure of the cave.]

After this, I said, imagine the enlightenment or ignorance of our nature in a figure: Behold! human beings living in a sort of underground den, which has a mouth open towards the light, and reaching all across the den; they have been here from their childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they cannot move, and can only see before them; for the chains are arranged in such a manner as to prevent them from turning their heads around. At a distance above and behind them the light of a fire is blazing, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way; and you will see, if you look, a low wall built along the way, like the screen which marionette players have before them, over which they show the puppets.

I see, he said.

And do you see, I said, men passing along the wall carrying vessels, which appear over the wall; also figures of men and animals, made of wood and stone and various materials; and some of the passengers, as you would expect, are talking, and some of them are silent?

That is a strange image, he said, and they are strange prisoners.

Like ourselves, I replied; and they see only their own shadows, or the shadows of one another, which the fire throws on the opposite wall of the cave?

True, he said: how could they see anything but the shadows if they were never allowed to move their heads?

And of the objects which are being carried in like manner they would only see the shadows?

Yes, he said.

And if they were able to talk with one another, would they not suppose that they were naming what was actually before them?

Very true.

And suppose further that the prison had an echo which came from the other side, would they not be sure to fancy that the voice which they heard was that of a passing shadow?

No question, he replied.

There can be no question, I said, that the truth would be to them just nothing but the shadows of the images.

That is certain.

And now look again, and see how they are released and cured of their folly. At first, when any one of them is liberated and compelled suddenly to go up and turn his neck round and walk and look at the light, he will suffer sharp pains; the glare will distress him, and he will be unable to see the realities of which in his former state he had seen the shadows: and then imagine some one saying to him, that what he saw before was an illusion, but that now he is approaching real Being, and has a truer sight and vision of more real things,—what will be his reply? And you may further imagine that his instructor is pointing to the objects as they pass and requiring him to name them,—will he not be in difficulty? Will he not fancy that the shadows which he formerly saw are truer than the objects which are now shown to him?

Far truer.

And if he is compelled to look at the light, will he not have a pain in his eyes, which will make him turn away to take refuge in the object of vision which he can see, and which he will conceive to be clearer than the things which are now being shown to him?

True, he said.

And suppose once more, that he is reluctantly dragged up a steep and rugged ascent, and held fast and forced into the presence of the sun himself, do you not think that he will be pained and irritated, and when he approaches the light he will have his eyes dazzled, and will not be able to see any of the realities which are now affirmed to be the truth?

Not all in a moment, he said.

He will require to get accustomed to the sight of the upper world. And first he will see the shadows best, next the reflections of men and other objects in the water, and then the objects themselves; next he will gaze upon the light of the moon and the stars: and he will see the sky and the stars by night, better than the sun, or the light of the sun, by day?

Certainly.

And at last he will be able to see the sun, and not mere reflections of him in the water, but he will see him as he is in his own proper place, and not in another; and he will contemplate his nature?

Certainly.

And after this he will reason that the sun is he who gives the seasons and the years, and is the guardian of all that is in the visible world, and in a certain way the cause of all things which he and his fellows have been accustomed to behold?

Clearly, he said, he would come to the other first and to this afterwards.

And when he remembered his old habitation, and the wisdom of the den and his fellow-prisoners, do you not suppose that he would felicitate himself on the change, and pity them?

Certainly he would.

And if they were in the habit of conferring honors on those who were quickest to observe and remember and foretell which of the shadows went before, and which followed after, and which were together, do you think that he would care for such honors and glories, or envy the possessors of them? Would he not say with Homer,—

> «Better be a poor man, and have a poor master,»

and endure anything, rather than to think and live after their manner?

Yes, he said, I think that he would rather suffer anything than live after their manner.

Imagine once more, I said, that such a one, coming suddenly out of the sun, were to be replaced in his old situation: is he not certain to have his eyes full of darkness?

Very true, he said.

And if there were a contest, and he had to compete in measuring the shadows with the prisoners who have never moved out of the den, during the time that his sight is weak, and before his eyes are steady (and the time which would be needed to acquire this new habit of sight might be very considerable), would he not be ridiculous? Men would say of him that up he went and down he comes without his eyes; and that there was no use in even thinking of ascending: and if any one tried to loose another and lead him up to the light, let them only catch the offender in the act, and they would put him to death.

No question, he said.

This allegory, I said, you may now append to the previous argument: the prison is the world of sight, the light of the fire is the sun, the ascent and vision of the things above you may truly regard as the upward progress of the soul into the intellectual world; that is my poor belief, to which, at your desire, I have given expression. Whether I am right or not, God only knows: but whether true or false, my opinion is that in the world of knowledge the idea of good appears last of all, and is seen only with an effort; and when seen, is also inferred to be the universal author of all things beautiful and right, parent of light and the lord of light in this world, and the source of truth and reason in the other: this is the first great cause, which he who would act rationally either in public or private life must behold.

I agree, he said, as far as I am able to understand you.

I should like to have your agreement in another matter, I said. For I would not have you marvel that those who attain to this beatific vision are unwilling to descend to human affairs; but their souls are ever hastening into the upper world in which they desire to dwell: and this is very natural, if our allegory may be trusted.

Certainly, that is quite natural.

And is there anything surprising in one who passes from divine contemplations to human things, misbelieving himself in a ridiculous manner; if while his eyes are blinking and before he has become accustomed to the darkness visible, he is compelled to fight in courts of law, or in other places, about the images or shadows of images of justice, and is endeavoring to meet the conceptions of those who have never yet seen the absolute justice?

There is nothing surprising in that, he replied.

Any one who has common-sense will remember that the bewilderments of the eyes are of two kinds, and arise from two causes,—either from coming out of the light or from going into the light; which is true of the mind's eye quite as much as of the bodily eye: and he who remembers this when he sees the soul of any one whose vision is perplexed and weak, will not be too ready to laugh; he will first ask whether that soul has come out of the brighter life, and is unable to see because unaccustomed to the dark, or having turned from darkness to the day is dazzled by excess of light. And then he will count the one happy in his condition and state of being, and he will pity the other; or if he have a mind to laugh at the soul which comes from below into the light, there will be more reason in this than in the laugh which greets the other from the den.

That, he said, is a very just remark.

But if this is true, then certain professors of education must be mistaken in saying that they can put a knowledge into the soul which was not there before, like giving eyes to the blind.

Yes, that is what they say, he replied.

Whereas, I said, our argument shows that the power is already in the soul; and that as the eye cannot turn from darkness to light without the whole body, so too, when the eye of the soul is turned round, the whole soul must be turned from the world of generation into that of Being, and become able to endure the sight of Being and of the brightest and best of Being,—that is to say, of the good.

Very true.

And this is conversion: and the art will be how to accomplish this as easily and completely as possible; not implanting eyes, for they exist already, but giving them a right direction, which they have not.

Yes, he said, that may be assumed.

And hence while the other qualities seem to be akin to the body, being infused by habit and exercise and not originally innate, the virtue of wisdom is part of a divine essence, and has a power which is everlasting; and by this conversion is rendered useful and profitable, and is also capable of becoming hurtful and useless.

FROM ‹THE STATESMAN›

STRANGER—When we praise quickness and energy and acuteness, whether of mind or body or speech, we express our praise of the quality which we admire, by one word; and that one word is manliness or courage.

Young Socrates—How is that?

Stranger — We speak of an action as energetic and manly, quick and manly, or vigorous and manly; this is the common epithet which we apply to all persons of this class.

Young Socrates — True.

Stranger — And do we not often praise the quiet strain of action also?

Young Socrates — To be sure.

Stranger — And do we not then say the opposite of what we said of the other?

Young Socrates — How do you mean?

Stranger — In speaking of the mind, we say, How calm! How temperate! These are the terms in which we describe the working of the intellect; and again we speak of actions as deliberate and gentle, and of the voice as smooth and deep, and of all rhythmical movement and of music in general as having a proper solemnity. To all these we attribute not courage, but a name indicative of order.

Young Socrates — Very true.

Stranger — But when, on the other hand, either of these is out of place, the names of either are changed into terms of censure.

Young Socrates — How is that?

Stranger — Too great sharpness or quickness or hardness is termed violence or madness; too great slowness or gentleness is called cowardice or sluggishness: and we may observe that these qualities, and in general the temperance of one class of characters and the manliness of another, are arrayed as enemies on opposite sides, and do not mingle with one another in their respective actions; and if we pursue the inquiry, we shall find that the men who have these qualities are at variance with one another.

Young Socrates — How do you mean?

Stranger — In the instance which I mentioned, and very likely in many others, there are some things which they praise as being like themselves, and other things which they blame as belonging to the opposite characters; and out of this, many quarrels and occasions of quarrels arise among them.

Young Socrates — True.

Stranger — The difference between the two classes is amusing enough at times; but when affecting really important matters, becomes a most utterly hateful disorder in the State.

Young Socrates — What part of the State is thus affected?

Stranger — The whole course of life suffers from the disorder. For the orderly class are always ready to lead a peaceful life, and do their own business; this is their way of living with all men at home, and they are equally ready to keep the peace with foreign States. And on account of this fondness of theirs for peace, which is often out of season where their influence prevails, they become by degrees unwarlike, and bring up their young men to be like themselves; they are at the command of others: and hence in a few years they and their children and the whole city often pass imperceptibly from the condition of freemen into that of slaves.

Young Socrates — That is a hard, cruel fate.

Stranger — What now is the case with the more courageous natures? Are they not always inciting their country to go to war, owing to their excessive love of the military life? Their enemies are many and mighty; and if they do not ruin their cities, they enslave and subject them to their enemies.

Young Socrates — That, again, is true.

Stranger — Must we not admit, then, that these two classes are always in the greatest antipathy and antagonism to one another?

Young Socrates — We cannot deny that. . . .

Stranger — I want to know whether any constructive art will make any, even the smallest thing, out of bad and good materials indifferently, if this can be avoided? whether all art does not rather reject the bad as far as possible, and accept the good and fit materials, and out of these like and unlike elements gathering all into one, work out some form or idea?

Young Socrates — To be sure.

Stranger — Then the true natural art of statesmanship will never allow any State to be formed by a combination of good and bad men, if this can be avoided; but will begin by testing human natures in play, and after testing them, will intrust them to proper teachers who are her ministers: she will herself give orders and maintain authority,— like weaving, which continually gives orders and maintains authority over the carders and all the others who prepare the material for the work; showing to the subsidiary arts the works which she deems necessary for making the web.

Young Socrates — Quite true.

Stranger—In like manner, the royal science appears to me to be the mistress of all careful educators and instructors; and having this queenly power, will not allow any of them to train characters unsuited to the political constitution which she desires to create, but such as are suitable only. Other natures, which have no part in manliness and temperance or any other virtuous inclination, and from the necessity of an evil nature are violently carried away to godlessness and injustice and violence, she exterminates by death, and punishes them by exile and the greatest of disgraces.

Young Socrates—That is commonly said.

Stranger—But those who are wallowing in ignorance and baseness she bows under the yoke of slavery.

Young Socrates—Quite right.

Stranger—The rest of the citizens—of whom, if they have education, something noble may be made, and who are capable of social science—the kingly art blends and weaves together; taking on the one hand those whose natures tend rather to courage, which is the stronger element and may be regarded as the warp, and on the other hand those which incline to order and gentleness, and which are represented in the figure as spun thick and soft after the manner of the woof,—these, which are naturally opposed, she seeks to bind and weave together. . . This, then, according to our view, is the perfection of the web of political action. There is a direct intertexture of the brave and temperate natures, when the kingly science has drawn the two sorts of lives into communion by unanimity and kindness; and having completed the noblest and best of all webs of which a common life admits, and enveloping therein all other inhabitants of cities, whether slaves or freemen, binds them in one fabric and governs and presides over them, omitting no element of a city's happiness.

Young Socrates—You have completed, Stranger, a very perfect image of the King and of the Statesman.

[The preceding selections from the Dialogues are Professor Jowett's translations.]

TITUS MACCIUS PLAUTUS

(254 ?–184 B. C.)

BY GONZALEZ LODGE

Titus Maccius Plautus, Rome's greatest comic poet, died in 184 B. C. According to the very meagre tradition recorded by Gellius, he was born at Sarsina in Umbria, but came as a young man to Rome. There he worked in a subordinate capacity with a theatrical troupe, and accumulated some money. He then engaged in foreign trade, but was unsuccessful, and therefore returned to Rome and worked in a mill. Here he produced three plays which were accepted by the ædiles; and from this time on he devoted himself, with the greatest success, to writing.

The number of his plays has been a matter of discussion since shortly after his death. His great popularity caused the work of other writers to be ascribed to him. Hence in Cicero's time, the great antiquarian Varro found it necessary to make a careful examination of the plays then circulating under the name of Plautus,—one hundred and thirty in number, according to some authorities. He found that twenty-one were acknowledged by all critics as genuine; and he himself decided that nineteen others were probably so. At the revival of learning, but eight comedies were known. Later however other manuscripts were discovered, giving twenty more or less complete plays; finally, in 1815, an important palimpsest of the fourth century A. D. was found, which showed fragments of still another. Hence it has generally been assumed that we have the twenty-one undisputed dramas referred to by Varro.

The most striking peculiarity of these plays is, that though written for Romans and in Latin, the plot and character are generally Attic, and the scene is usually Athens. This was due to the literary conditions at Rome. Until after the first Punic War, the life of Rome had been one long succession of wars for existence, during the latter period of which the Romans came into contact with Greek culture and civilization in Sicily and lower Italy. There had been no opportunity for a native literature to develop. That there were at hand the elements of one, which under normal circumstances might soon have shown a sturdy growth, we have abundant evidence; but when they found time to turn their attention to literature, it was found to be much easier to transfer the finished products of Greek culture to Rome, than to develop the native product to suit a taste already grown critical from foreign contact.

The bloom of the New Comedy was just past in Greece, and the stage in Greek lands was still held by the masters of this school,—Menander, Philemon, and others. They portrayed with greater or less accuracy the rather ignoble social life of the period, sometimes descending to the coarseness of burlesque. Plautus had probably become familiar with such plays during his wandering youth, and he naturally turned to them for the inspiration of his maturer years.

Accordingly we cannot expect to find in Plautus's comedies a representation of the Roman life of the time. Their originals were Greek; and however much worked over, they remained Greek. Roman allusions and jokes, and some purely Roman features, were introduced, probably to lessen the jar on the Roman sensibility: but these were of minor importance; for it must be remembered that any criticism of the public life of Rome was vigorously repressed by a strict police censorship, and that only such Roman allusions would be tolerated as would cause laughter without ill-feeling. How far the plays as thus recast were still untrue to Roman life, we cannot decide; but they were probably much less realistic to the Romans than are French plays to us.

The chief interest centres about the young men. There are two principal types, which may be roughly called the good and the bad; but there are numerous variations in the individual characters. The minority are represented as brave, high-minded, and genial, cultured in manners, prudent and economical in habits; the majority are audacious or vacillating spendthrifts, moody and dissipated, living from hand to mouth. Frequently the contrast between the two types is made more striking by their juxtaposition in the same play. Almost all are in love, but are hindered from gaining possession of their loved ones by lack of money. Being still under the control of their fathers, they are without resources; and their expedients to raise money, and their success or misfortune in this pursuit of their loves, form the subject of the play. They are themselves more or less passive, the brunt of the work falling upon their slaves; but they are keenly interested in the slave's efforts, and follow his actions with the liveliest emotions. When the outlook is gloomy they threaten to leave home forever, or to destroy themselves; supplicating the slaves most abjectly, or threatening them with the direst punishments. When success seems assured they break out into violent transports, calling their slaves by the most endearing names, and often showing their gratitude by manumitting them. At other times they testify to the strength of their passion by lackadaisical soliloquies, and are in general «very hard to endure.»

Opposed to these young men, who are still under their father's control, we have in several plays the braggart soldier. He is usually the rival most feared by the young men, for he has the money of which they are in such urgent need. He is usually portrayed with the bearing of a lion but the courage of a hare, always boasting of his prowess but ready to yield to the slightest display of force,—the type immortalized once for all in Falstaff. He is the victim of all the intrigues, and is invariably cheated out of both his money and his mistress.

The inamoratas of the young men are usually slave girls, who were originally free-born, but were either exposed or stolen in infancy, and have been brought up in low surroundings for immoral purposes. There is usually a genuine attachment between them and the young men; the desire of both is matrimony, which the young men hope to accomplish by purchasing the girls and manumitting them. Frequently their origin is discovered; they are acknowledged by delighted parents, who hasten to betroth them to their happy lovers. Sometimes however the women are much more debased, and the plays too coarse to be at all enjoyable.

The most important rôle is that of the slaves. These usually stand shoulder to shoulder with their young masters, and give them their loyal and constant support. Naturally they fall into two classes,—the honest and the dishonest. The former are few in numbers; and are either old slaves who have grown up in the family, and perhaps served as tutors for the children, or stupid country clowns, coarse in speech and habit, who serve mainly as foils to their unscrupulous fellows. The dishonest slaves are the life of the play, and ancient critics regarded their rôles as the most important. Their chief characteristics are an extraordinary boldness and skill in invention and trickery, with the most utter shamelessness in carrying out their plans. They help their young masters out of their difficulties, supply the necessary money, and at the same time furnish the broad humor so essential to comedy. Running the risk of the most condign punishment from the fathers, or others whom they have deceived, they preserve a careless coolness in the most trying circumstances, and almost always manage to secure a full and complete pardon, and often manumission at the end.

The lovers and their assisting slaves are often opposed by stern fathers. These are sordid and miserly elders, who have either accumulated a competence by severe toil or have married for money. In their youth they were dissipated, but they have no sympathy with their sons when they follow a similar course. They are therefore the objects of attack by the slaves, and are usually cheated out of the money needed. Their feeling towards their wives is one of aversion and contempt, and they take delight in deceiving them. The wives in their turn are usually depicted as shrewish and unlovely, which may be for comic effect merely. The other class of fathers is more attractive. These are genial and mild, prudent and wise in council. They have frequently gained their wealth in foreign trade, and settled down to enjoy a quiet and dignified old age. They are their sons' confidants instead of enemies, and look kindly upon their youthful follies out of remembrance of their own youth.

Peculiar to Comedy are the Parasites. These are decayed gentlemen who live by their wits. They often attach themselves to some family, or young man, and assist the latter in his love intrigues. They are perpetually hungry, and during the most serious discussions their minds run continually upon the prospects of a dinner. They endure the most scornful snubs if they can get but the lowest seats at the feast. They are the perpetual objects of mockery, and their exaltation or depression when they are invited to a dinner or cheated of it furnish some of the liveliest scenes. The plots in which these and minor characters appear are somewhat stereotyped, and the motives are few and simple. But the most of the plays may be grouped roughly in four classes: those in which some particular type of character is portrayed; those which turn upon the recovery of children lost or stolen in infancy; plays of simple intrigue; and those which turn upon the impersonation of an individual or a pair of individuals by another.

The best of the first class is the 'Aulularia,' which gives us the fortunes and misfortunes of a miser who has discovered a pot of gold in his house, and imagines that every one knows it and has designs upon it. The 'Miles Gloriosus' portrays the braggart soldier, who is always boasting of his glorious deeds in war, and trying his fortune with the ladies,—with indifferent success. The most interesting example of the second class is the 'Rudens'; which, though faulty in construction, shows Plautus at his best, and is really of a high order. Of a lower order are the 'Curculio' and the 'Epidicus'; the latter of which, as Plautus tells us in another comedy, was his favorite drama. In these plays, opportunity is given for the liveliest play of feeling, and some of the scenes where the child is recognized are very pathetic. The most interesting example of the third class is the 'Trinummus.' An old man going abroad on a business venture has committed to the care of a faithful friend a sum of money, which in case of necessity shall be used to preserve his family, a son and daughter, from the excesses of the profligate son. The play records the devices of the friend to employ some of it as a dower for the daughter, without allowing the son to know that he has it in his possession. A parasite is accordingly hired for three nummi (shillings) to act as messenger from the absent father; and he gives his name to the play. To the fourth class belong the three most important comedies: the ‘Captives’ and the ‘Menæchmi,’ abstracts of which follow; and the ‘Amphitruo,’ a tragicomedy, which is interesting as showing some tendency to burlesque the religious myths of the people. The play gives the story of how Jupiter and Mercury personated Amphitruo and his slave Sosia, for the purpose of beguiling Amphitruo's wife Alcmena.

Two of the best plays may be sketched in outline. We place first the ‘Captives,’ though the plot hardly justifies Lessing's extravagant praise of it as the best ever devised. At the outset we are informed that Philopolemus, only son of a certain Hegio, was some time previously captured in battle and made a slave in Elis; since which time Hegio has been buying war captives, with the hope that he might finally secure some Elean of quality with whom to effect an exchange for his son. The stage represents Hegio's court-yard. He, entering, informs us that he has recently made a purchase of important captives, two of whom he thinks may serve his purpose. After he retires, the two captives, Philocrates and his slave Tyndarus, are brought in, guarded, and lamenting their fate. They plan to personate each other, with the hope that Philocrates, if looked upon as the slave, may the easier escape. In the next scene Hegio learns from them that his son is actually in bondage to Philocrates's father, and the supposed Tyndarus (really the master, Philocrates) is sent away to negotiate an exchange. Subsequently Hegio introduces another of the captives, Aristophontes, who claims to have known Philocrates in Elis. He being brought face to face with the supposed Philocrates, immediately discloses the true state of affairs; and Hegio in a fury orders the now discovered Tyndarus to punishment. Later, Philocrates returns with Philopolemus; and in the ensuing explanation Tyndarus is discovered to be a long-lost son of Hegio, who was stolen when he was but four years old.

In the ‘Menæchmi,’ the prologist states that an old Syracusan merchant had two sons. Once on a business trip to Tarentum he took one of the boys, who strayed away in the crowd and was stolen. On his return the father was shipwrecked and drowned. The grandfather bestowed the name of the lost boy, Menæchmus, upon the surviving son at home. Long afterwards the son set out in search of his brother; and in the course of his travels arrived at Epidamnus, where the play opens. The first scene is an interview between a parasite and Menæchmus I. (the lost one), who gleefully explains how he has stolen his wife's cloak, and is going to bestow it upon Erotium, a courtesan. On the appearance of Erotium he presents the cloak, and bespeaks a dinner for himself and the parasite. In the next scene Menæchmus II. and his servant Messenio appear. Then follow two amusing scenes, first with the cook who is to prepare the dinner, and later with Erotium; both think they are talking with Menæchmus I.: finally Menæchmus II. goes in with Erotium to dinner. Later the parasite appears, complaining that he has been detained and is afraid he has lost his dinner. Menæchmus II. comes out of Erotium's house with the cloak, which he is to take to a cleaner's to be cleaned. The parasite, thinking that he is Menæchmus I., attacks him for not waiting for him, and finally, in high dudgeon departs to inform the wife of her husband's doings. After Menæchmus II. leaves the stage, Menæchmus I. appears and is met by his angry wife, whom he tries to pacify by promising to return the cloak. After his departure Menæchmus II. enters with the cloak. He has an amusing discussion with the wife, and later with the wife's father, whom she has summoned in desperation. He finally gets rid of them by feigning madness; and the old man goes in search of a physician, while Menæchmus II. hurries away. Then Menæchmus I. enters, and is pounced upon by the physician and his attendants. He is rescued by Messenio, who has just entered in search of his master, Menæchmus II. In the final scene the two Menæchmi are brought face to face; and the kinship of the long-separated brothers is explained by Messenio, who is given his freedom for his services.

Certain of the plays were performed occasionally down to the close of the Republic, or even later. Indeed, Plautus remained a much read and appreciated author from the time of Varro and Cicero until the dark ages. The Christian fathers, especially Jerome, were very fond of him. At the Renaissance the newly discovered plays were eagerly caught up in Italy, and later in France and Germany. Translations were made; and great authors wrote plays based upon those of Plautus, of which a few may be mentioned: Molière's ‹Amphitryon› was based upon the ‹Amphitruo,› and the two together inspired Dryden's ‹Amphitryon.› Molière's ‹L'Avare› was an imitation of the ‹Aulularia,› and it in turn inspired Shadwell's ‹Miser› and Fielding's ‹Miser.› The ‹Captivi› was the basis of Ariosto's ‹Suppositi› and of Rotrou's ‹Les Captifs.› Ben Jonson's ‹The Case is Altered› has scenes from the ‹Aulularia› and ‹Captivi.› To the Menæchmi must be referred Cecchi's ‹Le Moglie,› Goldoni's ‹I due Gemelli,› Shakespeare's ‹Comedy of Errors,› and many others. The ‹Miles Gloriosus› formed a favorite type; and we find traces of it in Dolce's ‹Il Capitano,› Corneille's ‹L'Illusion Comique,› Udall's ‹Ralph Roister Doister,› and others. A careful study of Plautus's influence on modern literature may be found in Reinhardtstöttner's ‹Spätere Bearbeitungen Plautinischer Lustspiele› (Leipzig, 1886).

By reason of the great difference between the archaic Latin of Plautus and the later classical Latin, the manuscript tradition soon became faulty and the text corrupt. During this century great progress has been made in the reconstruction of the text, through the labors of many scholars, notably Ritschl and Studemund. Ritschl began a critical edition of Plautus as early as 1849. This was completed after his death by three of his pupils,—Goetz, Schoell, and Loewe,—the last part appearing in 1894. This edition has a marvelously complete apparatus criticus, but the text is marred by many violent emendations and arbitrary changes. Two of the same editors, Goetz and Schoell, have since published a complete text in the Teubner series (Leipzig, 1893–95); but this edition is as conservative as the larger one is radical, and the text has been left incomprehensible in many places through despair of certain emendation. The best text for practical use is that of Leo (Berlin, 1895–96). No adequate English translation of the whole of Plautus has appeared. That of Thornton, published in the last century, in blank verse, follows a poor text, and that by Riley in the Bohn collection has no merit but that of literalness. In 1893 appeared the first volume of a new translation in the original metres by Sugden, comprising the Amphitruo, Asinaria, Aulularia, Bacchides, and Captivi. The editor has taken surprising liberties, not merely expurgating his text, but actually «correcting» the plots.

Gonzalez Lodge

[The citations from Plautus are translated for the ‹Library› by William C. Lawton.]

FROM ‹MILES GLORIOSUS› (THE BRAGGART SOLDIER)

[The soldier himself opens the play, coming forth from his house, which, with a neighbor's, forms the back of the scene. He is attended by his Falstaffian retinue, and also by his especial flatterer and shadow Artotrogus,—«Breadeater.» The pompous veteran has the first word.]

PYRGOPOLINICES—See to it that more splendid be my shield,
Than the sun's rays are when the day is bright;
So when there's need, in battle's close array
Its sheen may blind the eyes of enemies.
And this my cutlass I would comfort too,
That it be not downhearted, nor lament
That it is worn so long in idleness,
Though sadly bent on massacre of foes!—
But where is Artotrogus?

Artotrogus [*promptly*] — Here, beside
The man so valiant, kingly, fortunate,
Mars might not such a warrior call himself,
Nor dare to match your valor with his own!

Pyrgopolinices —
That one I saved on the Curculionian plains,
When Búmbomáchides Clýtomestóridysárchides,
Grandson of Neptune, was commander-in-chief —

Artotrogus —
I remember. He, you mean, in arms of gold,
Whose legions with your breath you puffed away,
As wind doth leaves and rushes good for thatch.

Pyrgopolinices —
Why, that is nothing!

[And the complacent warrior goes striding, with nodding helmet-plumes and waving locks, up and down the stage; so that the weary flatterer, beginning his return compliment, presently has an instant to tell *us* of the audience — behind his hand — something of his real opinions.]

Artotrogus — So forsooth it is,
To deeds I'll tell — [*Aside*] which you did never do!
If you can find a more mendacious man,
Or one more boastful than this fellow is,
Take me and hold me for your chattel, then!
Just one thing: olive salad he *can* bolt!

Pyrgopolinices [*turning*] —
Where are you?

[The parasite pretends he has been all the time cataloguing the hero's exploits: —]

Artotrogus — Here! — Then, there's that elephant:
How with a fisticuff you broke his arm!

Pyrgopolinices —
What's that? his arm?

Artotrogus — His thigh I meant, of course.

Pyrgopolinices —
I didn't try to strike.

Artotrogus — No! If you had,
With effort, through the creature's hide and heart
And through his bones your arm had made its way.

Pyrgopolinices [*modestly*] —
That doesn't matter.

Artotrogus — No, 'tis not worth while
For me to tell, who know your valorous deeds.

[*Aside*] —
My belly makes this misery; and my ears
Must hearken, lest my teeth have naught to do.
To every lie he tells I must assent!

Pyrgopolinices —
What am I saying?

Artotrogus — I know what you would say:
I remember, it happened.

Pyrgopolinices — What?

Artotrogus [*rather wearily*] — Whatever it is.

Pyrgopolinices [*more sharply*] —
You remember — ?

Artotrogus [*rapidly*] — Yes, a hundred in Cilicia,
And fifty, a hundred in Scytholatronia,
Thirty from Sardis, sixty Macedonians,—
All of them in a single day you slew.

Pyrgopolinices —
What is the grand sum total?

Artotrogus — Seven thousand!

Pyrgopolinices [*complacently*] —
So many should it be. You reckon well.

Artotrogus —
I have no records,—I remember it so.

Pyrgopolinices —
Your memory's good.

Artotrogus — The tidbits prompt me aright!

Pyrgopolinices —
While you shall play your part as you do now,
Table companion will I hold you still.

Artotrogus —
What! In Cappadocia, at a single blow
You had slain five hundred! But — your sword was dull.

Pyrgopolinices —
Poor wretched infantry, I let them live.

Artotrogus —
Why say what all men know, that on the earth
You only, Pyrgopolinices, live
In valor, beauty, deeds, unconqueredest?
All women love you,— and good reason too,
You are *so* handsome. Like those yesterday
That plucked my cloak.

Pyrgopolinices [*eagerly*] — What did they say to you?

Artotrogus —
They asked me: «Is this Achilles?» so said one.

«Yes, 'tis his brother,» said I. Then the other:
«Well, he *is* handsome, surely,» so she said,
«And noble. See how well his hair becomes him!
Happy the women are with whom he wives!»

Pyrgopolinices —
Did they say so?

Artotrogus — Why, yes! Both made me swear
To-day I'd bring you in procession by.

Pyrgopolinices [*pensively*] —
To be *too* handsome is a piteous thing!

Artotrogus —
It bores *me!* For they pray and crowd and beg,
So that I cannot get your business done.

[A movement of the soldier at this word «business» gives the quick-witted flatterer his cue.]

Pyrgopolinices —
Have you—

Artotrogus — You mean your tablets? Yes, and pen.

Pyrgopolinices —
You give your mind to mine right wittily.

Artotrogus —
'Tis fit that I should know your nature well,
And try to scent out that which you desire.

Pyrgopolinices —
'Tis time, methinks, to hasten to the Forum;
For there must I bestow their wage upon
The hirelings I enlisted yesterday.
For King Seleucus begged me earnestly,
To gather and enroll him mercenaries.

Artotrogus —
Why, then, let's go.

Pyrgopolinices — Attendants, follow me!

[*Exeunt omnes.*

[The prologue, rather singularly, is now spoken, at the opening of the second act. It may be interesting to cite a few lines, though its literary merit is small.]

Palæstrio [*a slave, appearing from the soldier's house, as Prologue*] —
This argument I'll tell you courteously,
If you to listen will be mannerly.
Who will not listen, let him up and go,
So making room for one disposed to hear.
This comedy we are about to play,

For sake of which you sit so festive there,—
Its argument and name I'll tell to you.
‹Alazon› is the drama's name in Greek,
And Braggadocio is our word for it. . . .
This's Ephesus. Yon soldier is my master,
Who went thence townward; boastful, insolent,
Filthy, and full of crapulence and lies.
He says the women chase him all unsought.
A laughing-stock he is, where he appears.
So, while with mocking lips they lead him on,
Most of the girls you'll see with mouths awry!

[The last line is perhaps a random jest aimed at the extravagant comic masks. If so, it is an indication of post-Plautine date. One of the most interesting prologues, that of the ‹Casina,› was certainly composed for a late revival of a remarkably coarse and brutal play. A few examples of these prologues may be instructive.]

PROLOGUE OF ‹CASINA›

The men who drink old wine I count as wise,
And those that gladly hear an ancient play.
Since antique words and phrases please you well,
An old-time drama should delight you more.
For the new comedies that now appear
Are even more debased than these new coins.
Now we have hearkened to the people's cry,
That you desire to hear the Plautine plays,
And so bring out this ancient comedy,
Which you approved;—that is, you elder men:
The younger sort, I am sure, have known it not;
But that you may, we earnestly shall strive.
All dramas it surpassed, when acted first.
The flower of poets still were living then,
Though now departed whither all must pass,—
In absence helpful still to those that are.
And with full earnestness we beg you all
Kindly to give attention to our troop.
Cast from your minds your cares and debts away.
Let no one stand in terror of his dun.
'Tis holiday. The banks keep holiday.
'Tis peace! The forum has its halcyon days.

PROLOGUE OF ‹TRINUMMUS›

Enter Two Female Figures

MOTHER — Follow, my daughter, to fulfill your task.
Daughter — I follow, ignorant what the end may be.
Mother — 'Tis here: lo, yonder house; go straightway in.
[*Exit daughter.*

[*To the audience*] —
Now, lest you err, I'll give you guidance brief, —
At least if you will promise to attend.
Who then I am, and she who passed from here
Within, if you but hearken, I will tell.
First, Plautus made my name Extravagance,
And called my daughter yonder, Poverty.
But why impelled by me she entered there,
Hearken and lend your ears while I explain.
A certain youth, who in that house abides,
Has squandered, with my aid, his heritage.
And seeing he can no longer nourish me,
I have given my daughter to abide with him. —
Do not expect the argument of our play.
The old men coming yonder will make clear
The story. In Greek, ‹Thesaurus› was it called.
Philemon wrote it. Plautus rendering it
In barbarous speech, called it ‹Trinummus›: now
He begs the drama may retain the name.
That's all. Farewell. In silence now attend.

[As these characters do not appear again, Plautus «made their names» here only. That is, this passage claims at least to be from the dramatist's own hand.]

PROLOGUE OF ‹RUDENS›

Arcturus speaks, as Prologue

WITH him who moves all races, seas, and lands,
In the celestial city I abide.
Such am I as you see, — a glorious star
That rises ever at the fitting time,
Here and in heaven. Arcturus is my name.
Shining by night in heaven amid the gods,
By day I walk on earth among mankind.
And other stars to earth from heaven descend:

Jupiter, ruler over gods and men,
Among the several nations sends us forth,
To know the deeds, ways, piety, and faith
Of men, according to the means of each.

[Such poetic passages are rare. Equally characteristic of Roman comedy are the Epilogues. We give two very brief examples, illustrating the two extremes of moral pretentiousness.]

EPILOGUE OF THE ‹CAPTIVES›

This our comedy, spectators, is for honest morals made.
No love-making is there in it, nor a love intrigue at all.
No false fathering of children, nor embezzlement of money.
Rarely do the poets fashion such a comedy as this,
Where the good are rendered better. . . .

EPILOGUE OF THE ‹ASINARIA›

If behind his goodwife's back this old man had a little fun,
Nothing new or strange he did, nor different from the common run!
If you wish to beg him off and save him from his cudgeling,
This by loud applause you'll have no trouble in accomplishing.

[A few miscellaneous passages will indicate the various tones struck in these rollicking comedies. Of course we rarely know how much is translation from the Greek, how much original invention.]

BUSYBODIES

Who, knowing nothing, claim to know it all.
What each intends, or will intend, they know.
What in the queen's ear the king said, they know.
They know what Juno chatted of with Jove.
What never was or is,—they know it, though!

UNPOPULARITY OF TRAGEDY

Mercury speaks, in the Prologue of the ‹Amphitruo›

The plot of this our tragedy next I'll tell—
Why did you knit your brows? Because I said
'Twould be a tragedy? I'm a god, I'll change it.
From tragedy I'll make it, if you will,
A comedy,—with every verse the same.
Will you, or not?—Why! stupid that I am,
As if, a god, I knew not your desire!
Upon this point I understand your minds.
I'll make a mixture, tragicomedy.

MIXTURE OF GREEK AND ROMAN MANNERS

From Prologue to ‹Casina›

Some here, methinks, will say among themselves,
«Prithee, what's this? A wedding among slaves?
A strange thing this to play, that's nowhere done!»
I say, in Carthage this *is* done, and Greece,
And of our country, in Apulia too.
Yes, servile marriages more carefully
Are celebrated than a freeman's there.

REWARDS OF HEROISM

[From the ‹Captives.› Tyndarus, a slave, captured in war with the young master who has been his lifelong comrade, exchanges name and station with him, and the supposed slave has been sent off to secure the ransom. The trick has just been discovered and acknowledged.]

Hegio— To your own utter misery this was done.
Tyndarus—Since for no sin I fall, little I reck.
If he who promised comes not, and I die,
This will be counted honor still, in death,
That I from servitude and hostile hands
Restored my master to his home and father;
And here I rather chose to put my life
In peril, than that he should be destroyed.
Hegio—Enjoy that glory, then, in Acheron!

Tyndarus —
I saved my lord; I exult that he is free,
Whom my old master trusted to my charge:
This you account ill done?
Hegio — Most wickedly.
Tyndarus —
But I, opposing you, say — righteously:
Bethink you, if a slave of yours had wrought
For *your* son this, what thanks you'd render him.
Would you release him from his servitude?
Would he be in your eyes a slave most dear?
Answer.
Hegio — I think so.
Tyndarus — Why then wroth at me?

[In one note of sad defiance we seem to hear an echo of Antigone's voice: it occurs a little later in the same scene.]

Beyond my death no ill have I to fear.
And though I live to utmost age, the time
Of suffering what you threaten still is brief.

FISHERMEN'S LUCK

[This passage is of unique interest as the one notable choral ode in Plautus. Its dramatic purpose is not very evident; and indeed, the fishermen do little more than add «local color» to the scene of shipwreck.]

Most wretched in every way is the life of men that are poverty-stricken;
And especially those who have learnt no trade, who are destitute of employment.
Whatever they happen to have in the house, they perforce therewith are contented.
But as for ourselves, how wealthy we are you may judge pretty well from our costume.
These hooks that you see, and bamboo poles, are our means for attaining a living;
And every day from the city we come to secure a subsistence hither.
Instead of gymnastics and boyish games, this toil is our exercise only.
Sea-urchins and limpets we strive to secure, with oysters and scallops and cockles;
The nettles as well, in the sea that dwell, and the striped crabs and the mussels.

And among the rocks after that with our hooks and lines we go a-fishing,
To capture our food from out of the sea. But if no luck is our portion,
And we catch no fish, then, salted ourselves, well drenched in the briny water,
To our homes we go, and slink out of sight, and to bed without any supper.
And unless we have eaten the cockles we caught, our dinner has been no better.

[Lastly, we may echo the epitaph, in rather awkward hexameters, which is said to have been composed by Plautus on himself. Gellius, who transmits it, evidently doubts its authenticity, but cites it on the high authority of Varro:—]

SINCE he has passed to the grave, for Plautus Comedy sorrows;
Now is the stage deserted; and Play, and Jesting, and Laughter,
Dirges, though written in numbers yet numberless, join in lamenting.

PLINY THE ELDER

(23–79 A. D.)

While the younger Pliny wins his place in literature chiefly by his refined taste and fastidious sense of form, these traits are so lacking in the uncle that his ponderous Cyclopædia of Natural Sciences stands almost like a massive bowlder beside the cultivated field of *belles-lettres*. It is indeed a sufficient proof of life-long industry; but Pliny was not, like Humboldt, himself a master of many sciences. He had, in numberless passages, not even sufficient critical intelligence to translate or summarize correctly his learned authorities. So while there are a thousand subjects on which we appeal to him as our sole authority, our gratitude is usually querulous,—as gratitude, indeed, too often is! Yet the courage, sincerity, and energy of the man are rarely equaled.

Pliny the Elder

Caius Plinius Secundus was a native of Cisalpine Gaul; probably of Como, where the family estates certainly lay. He rose to high favor at court under the Flavian emperors,—having been in fact an old fellow-soldier of Vespasian before that sturdy veteran's elevation to the throne,—and ended his days as admiral of the fleet at Misenum, as is so thrillingly related in a famous letter of his nephew cited in the next article. We are indebted to the same filial hand for an account of the elder scholar's methods of research.

«He had a quick apprehension, marvelous power of application, and was of an exceedingly wakeful temperament. He always began to study at midnight at the time of the feast of Vulcan, not for the sake of good luck, but for learning's sake; in winter generally at one in the morning, but never later than two, and often at twelve. He was a most ready sleeper, insomuch that he would sometimes, whilst in the midst of his studies, fall off and then wake up again. Before daybreak he used to wait upon Vespasian (who also used his nights for transacting business), and then proceed to execute the orders he had received. As soon as he returned home, he gave what time was left to study. After a short and light refreshment at noon (agreeably to the good old custom of our ancestors), he would frequently in the summer, if he was disengaged from business, lie down and bask in the sun: during which time some author was read to him, while he took notes and made extracts,—for every book he read he made extracts out of; indeed, it was a maxim of his that ‹no book was so bad but some good might be got out of it.› When this was over, he generally took a cold bath, then some slight refreshment and a little nap. After this, as if it had been a new day, he studied till supper-time, when a book was again read to him, which he would take down running notes upon. I remember once, his reader having mispronounced a word, one of my uncle's friends at the table made him go back to where the word was and repeat it again; upon which my uncle said to his friend, ‹Surely you understood it?› Upon his acknowledging that he did, ‹Why then,› said he, ‹did you make him go back again? We have lost more than ten lines by this interruption.› Such an economist he was of time! In the summer he used to rise from supper at daylight, and in winter as soon as it was dark: a rule he observed as strictly as if it had been a law of the State.

«Such was his manner of life amid the bustle and turmoil of the town; but in the country his whole time was devoted to study, excepting only when he bathed. In this exception I include no more than the time during which he was actually in the bath; for all the while he was being rubbed and wiped, he was employed either in hearing some book read to him or in dictating himself. In going about anywhere, as though he were disengaged from all other business, he applied his mind wholly to that single pursuit. A short-hand writer constantly attended him, with book and tablets, who in the winter wore a particular sort of warm gloves, that the sharpness of the weather might not occasion any interruption to my uncle's studies; and for the same reason, when in Rome, he was always carried in a chair. I recollect his once taking me to task for walking. ‹You need not,› he said, ‹lose those hours.› For he thought every hour gone that was not given to study. Through this extraordinary application he found time to compose the several treatises I have mentioned; besides one hundred and sixty volumes of extracts, which he left me in his will, consisting of a kind of commonplace, written on both sides in very small hand,—so that one might fairly reckon the number considerably more. He used himself to tell us that when he was comptroller of the revenue in Spain, he could have sold these manuscripts to Largius Licinus for four hundred thousand sesterces, and then there were not so many of them. When you consider the books he has read, and the volumes he has written, are you not inclined to suspect that he never was engaged in public duties or was ever in the confidence of his prince? On the other hand, when you are told how indefatigable he was in his studies, are you not inclined to wonder that he read and wrote no more than he did?»

The mass of citations just mentioned was evidently in great part utilized for the ‹Historia Naturalis,› or Cyclopædia. This great work was provisionally completed, and presented to the prince-regent Titus, in 77 A. D. The dedication is fulsome, and written in a style utterly inferior to his younger kinsman's. The body of the work varies in manner with the subject and the source of the citations, but our chief quarrel with it is for ambiguous — or even nonsensical — statements on important questions of fact.

The arrangement is sufficiently logical. After a general description of the universe (Book ii.), there follows Geography (Books iii.–vi.), Anthropology (vii.), Zoölogy (viii.–xi.), Botany (xii.–xxvii.), and Mineralogy (xxxiii.–xxxvii.). Under Botany a digression of eight books (xx.–xxvii.) deals with the medicinal uses of plants; and thereupon follows, somewhat out of place (xxviii.–xxxii.), an account of curatives derived from the animal world. Under Mineralogy the largest and most important sections deal with the uses of metals, pigments, and stones,—*i. e.*, with the history of the Fine Arts. Besides the introductory book, on the scope of his work and his sources of information, Pliny prefixes to each subsection a list of his authorities. These foot up nearly five hundred writers, more than two thirds of them in Greek. It is evident, however, that many, if not most, were cited at second or third hand from manuals, epitomes, etc.

Pliny's labors upon his Cyclopædia were apparently continued to the last. In the form we now have it, the book has probably been edited — not very critically — by the nephew after the uncle's death.

Pliny's work influenced later antiquity powerfully, and has been transmitted in many MSS. The most accessible edition is by Detlefson (Berlin, 1866–73) in six volumes. The Bohn translation (also in six volumes) is fairly good, and is abundantly supplied with learned and somewhat discursive foot-notes.

Our admiration for Pliny's iron energy increases to astonishment over the catalogue of his lost works. Of these the most important was perhaps the history of his own times, in thirty-one books; which was however soon eclipsed by Tacitus's masterpiece, and passed into oblivion. The wars in Germany were also treated in twenty books, doubtful points of grammar in eight, the life of his friend Pomponius Secundus in two, the art of oratory in three, and the hurling of the javelin from horseback apparently in one.

But even the catalogue grows exhausting!

INTRODUCTION TO LITHOLOGY

From the ‘Natural History’

It now remains for us to speak of stones, or in other words, the leading folly of the day; to say nothing at all of our taste for gems and amber, crystal and murrhine vases. For everything of which we have previously treated, down to the present book, may, by some possibility or other, have the appearance of having been created for the sake of man: but as to the mountains, Nature has made those for herself, as a kind of bulwark for keeping together the bowels of the earth; as also for the purpose of curbing the violence of the rivers, of breaking the waves of the sea, and so, by opposing to them the very hardest of her materials, putting a check upon those elements which are never at rest. And yet we must hew down these mountains, forsooth, and carry them off; and this for no other reason than to gratify our luxurious inclinations: heights which in former days it was reckoned a miracle even to have crossed!

Our forefathers regarded as a prodigy the passage of the Alps, first by Hannibal, and more recently by the Cimbri; but at the present day, these very mountains are cut asunder to yield us a thousand different marbles, promontories are thrown open to the sea, and the face of nature is being everywhere reduced to a level. We now carry away the barriers that were destined for the separation of one nation from another; we construct ships for the transport of our marbles; and amid the waves, the most boisterous element of nature, we convey the summits of the mountains to and fro: a thing, however, that is even less pardonable than to go on the search amid the regions of the clouds for vessels with which to cool our draughts, and to excavate rocks towering to the very heavens in order that we may have the satisfaction of drinking from ice! Let each reflect, when he hears of the high prices set upon these things, when he sees these ponderous masses carted and carried away, how many there are whose life is passed far more happily without them. For what utility or for what so-called pleasure do mortals make themselves the agents, or more truly speaking the victims, of such undertakings, except in order that others may take their repose in the midst of variegated stones? Just as though, too, the shades of night, which occupy one half of each man's existence, would forbear to curtail these imaginary delights.

Indeed, while making these reflections, one cannot but feel ashamed of the men of ancient times even. There are still in existence censorial laws, which forbid the kernels in the neck of swine to be served at table; dormice too, and other things too trifling to mention: and yet there has been no law passed forbidding marble to be imported, or the seas to be traversed in search of it!

It may possibly be observed that this was because marble was not then introduced. Such however is not the fact: for in the ædileship of M. Scaurus, three hundred and sixty columns were to be seen imported; for the decorations of a temporary theatre, too,— one that was destined to be in use for barely a single month. And yet the laws were silent thereon; in a spirit of indulgence for the amusements of the public, no doubt. But then, why such indulgence? or how do vices more insidiously steal upon us than under the plea of serving the public? By what other way, in fact, did ivory, gold, and precious stones, first come into use with private individuals?

Can we say that there is now anything that we have reserved for the exclusive use of the gods? However, be it so, let us admit of this indulgence for the amusements of the public; but still, why did the laws maintain their silence when the largest of these columns, pillars of Lucullan marble, as much as eight-and-thirty feet in height, were erected in the atrium of Scaurus? a thing, too, that was not done privately or in secret; for the contractor for the public sewers compelled him to give security for the possible damage that might be done in the carriage of them to the Palatium. When so bad an example as this was set, would it not have been advisable to take some precautions for the preservation of the public morals? And yet the laws still preserved their silence, when such enormous masses as these were being carried past the earthenware pediments of the temples of the gods, to the house of a private individual!

ANECDOTES OF ARTISTS

From the ‹Natural History›

APELLES

A CIRCUMSTANCE that happened to him in connection with Protogenes is worthy of notice. The latter was living at Rhodes, when Apelles disembarked there, desirous of seeing the works of a man whom he had hitherto only known by reputation. Accordingly, he repaired at once to the studio; Protogenes was not at home, but there happened to be a large panel upon the easel ready for painting, with an old woman who was left in charge. To his inquiries she made answer that Protogenes was not at home; and then asked whom she should name as the visitor. «Here he is,» was the reply of Apelles; and seizing a brush, he traced with color upon the panel an outline of a singularly minute fineness. Upon his return the old woman mentioned to Protogenes what had happened. The artist, it is said, upon remarking the delicacy of the touch, instantly exclaimed that Apelles must have been the visitor, for that no other person was capable of executing anything so exquisitely perfect. So saying, he traced within the same outline a still finer outline, but with another color; and then took his departure, with instructions to the woman to show it to the stranger if he returned, and to let him know that this was the person whom he had come to see. It happened as he anticipated,—Apelles returned; and vexed at finding himself thus surpassed, he took up another color and split both of the outlines, leaving no possibility of anything finer being executed. Upon seeing this, Protogenes admitted that he was defeated, and at once flew to the harbor to look for his guest. He thought proper, too, to transmit the panel to posterity, just as it was; and it always continued to be held in the highest admiration by all,—artists in particular. I am told that it was burnt in the first fire which took place at Cæsar's palace on the Palatine Hill; but in former times I have often stopped to admire it. Upon its vast surface it contained nothing whatever except the three outlines, so remarkably fine as to escape the sight: among the most elaborate works of numerous other artists it had all the appearance of a blank space; and yet by that very fact it attracted the notice of every one, and was held in higher estimation than any other painting there.

It was a custom with Apelles, to which he most tenaciously adhered, never to let any day pass, however busy he might be, without exercising himself by tracing some outline or other; a practice which has now passed into a proverb. It was also a practice with him, when he had completed a work, to exhibit it to the view of the passers-by in some exposed place; while he himself, concealed behind the picture, would listen to the criticisms that were passed upon it: it being his opinion that the judgment of the public was preferable to his own, as being the more discerning of the two. It was under these circumstances, they say, that he was censured by a shoemaker for having represented the shoes with one shoe-string too little. The next day, the shoemaker, quite proud at seeing the former error corrected, thanks to his advice, began to criticize the leg; upon which Apelles, full of indignation, popped his head out, and reminded him that a shoemaker should give no opinion beyond the shoes,—a piece of advice which has equally passed into a proverbial saying. In fact, Apelles was a person of great amenity of manners,—a circumstance which rendered him particularly agreeable to Alexander the Great, who would often come to his studio. He had forbidden himself by public edict, as already stated, to be represented by any other artist. On one occasion, however, when the prince was in his studio, talking a great deal about painting without knowing anything about it, Apelles quietly begged that he would quit the subject, telling him that he would get laughed at by the boys who were there grinding the colors: so great was the influence which he rightfully possessed over a monarch who was otherwise of an irascible temperament. And yet, irascible as he was, Alexander conferred upon him a very signal mark of the high estimation in which he held him: for having, in his admiration of her extraordinary beauty, engaged Apelles to paint Pancaste undraped,—the most beloved of all his concubines,—the artist while so engaged fell in love with her; upon which, Alexander, perceiving this to be the case, made him a present of her: thus showing himself, though a great king in courage, a still greater one in self-command,—this action redounding no less to his honor than any of his victories.

PRAXITELES

SUPERIOR to all the statues not only of Praxiteles, but of any other artist that ever existed, is his Cnidian Venus; for the inspection of which, many persons before now have purposely undertaken a voyage to Cnidos. The artist made two statues of the goddess, and offered them both for sale: one of them was represented with drapery, and for this reason was preferred by the people of Cos, who had the choice; the second was offered them at the same price, but on the grounds of propriety and modesty they thought fit to choose the other. Upon this, the Cnidians purchased the rejected statue, and immensely superior has it always been held in general estimation. At a later period, King Nicomedes wished to purchase this statue of the

Cnidians, and made them an offer to pay off the whole of their public debt, which was very large. They preferred, however, to submit to any extremity rather than part with it; and with good reason, for by this statue Praxiteles has perpetuated the glory of Cnidos. The little temple in which it is placed is open on all sides, so that the beauties of the statue admit of being seen from every point of view,—an arrangement which was favored by the goddess herself, it is generally believed.

PHIDIAS

Among all nations which the fame of the Olympian Jupiter has reached, Phidias is looked upon, beyond all doubt, as the most famous of artists; but to let those who have never seen his works know how deservedly he is esteemed, we will take this opportunity of adducing a few slight proofs of the genius which he displayed. In doing this we shall not appeal to the beauty of his Olympian Jupiter, nor yet to the vast proportions of his Athenian Minerva, six-and-twenty cubits in height, and composed of ivory and gold: but it is to the shield of this last statue that we shall draw attention; upon the convex face of which he has chased a combat of the Amazons, while upon the concave side of it he has represented the battle between the gods and the giants. Upon the sandals, again, we see the wars of the Lapithæ and Centaurs; so careful has he been to fill every smallest portion of his work with some proof or other of his artistic skill. To the story chased upon the pedestal of the statue, the name of the 'Birth of Pandora' has been given; and the figures of new-born gods to be seen upon it are no less than twenty in number. The figure of Victory, in particular, is most admirable; and connoisseurs are greatly struck with the serpent and the sphinx in bronze lying beneath the point of the spear. Let thus much be said incidentally in reference to an artist who can never be sufficiently praised.

THE MOST PERFECT WORKS OF NATURE

Peroration to the ‹Natural History›

Having now treated of all the works of Nature, it will be as well to take a sort of comparative view of her several productions, as well as of the countries which supply them. Throughout the whole earth, then, and wherever the vault of heaven extends, there is no country so beautiful, or which for the productions of nature merits so high a rank, as Italy, that ruler and second parent of the world; recommended as she is by her men, her women, her generals, her soldiers, her slaves, her superiority in the arts, and the illustrious examples of genius which she has produced. Her situation, too, is equally in her favor: the salubrity and mildness of her climate; the easy access which she offers to all nations; her coasts indented with so many harbors; the propitious breezes, too, that always prevail on her shores;—advantages, all of them due to her situation, lying as she does midway between the East and the West, and extended in the most favorable of all positions. Add to this the abundant supply of her waters, the salubrity of her groves, the repeated intersections of her mountain ranges, the comparative innocuousness of her wild animals, the fertility of her soil, and the singular richness of her pastures.

Whatever there is that the life of man ought not to feel in want of, is nowhere to be found in greater perfection than here; the cereals, for example, wine, oil, wool, flax, tissues, and oxen. As to horses, there are none I find preferred to those of Italy for the course; while for mines of gold, silver, copper, and iron, so long as it was deemed lawful to work them, Italy was held inferior to no country whatsoever. At the present day, teeming as she is with these treasures, she contents herself with lavishing upon us, as the whole of her bounties, her various liquids, and the numerous flavors yielded by her cereals and her fruits.

Next to Italy, if we except the fabulous regions of India, I would rank Spain, for my own part; those districts at least that lie in the vicinity of the sea. She is parched and sterile in one part, it is true; but where she is at all productive, she yields the cereals in abundance, oil, wine, horses, and metals of every kind. In all these respects, Gaul is her equal, no doubt; but Spain, on the other hand, outdoes the Gallic provinces in her spartium and her specular stone, in the products of her desert tracts, in her pigments that minister to our luxuries, in the ardor displayed by her people in laborious employments, in the perfect training of her slaves, in the robustness of body of her men, and in their general resoluteness of character.

As to the productions themselves, the greatest value of all, among the products of the sea, is attached to pearls; of objects that lie upon the surface of the earth, it is crystals that are most highly esteemed; and of those derived from the interior, adamas, smaragdus, precious stones, and murrhine, are the things upon which the highest value is placed. The most costly things that are matured by the earth are the kermes-berry and laser; that are gathered from trees,—nard and Seric tissues; that are derived from the trunks of trees,—logs of citrus-wood; that are produced by shrubs,—cinnamon, cassia, and amomum; that are yielded by the juices of trees or of shrubs,—amber, opobalsamum, myrrh, and frankincense; that are found in the roots of trees,—the perfumes derived from costus. The most valuable products furnished by living animals on land are the teeth of elephants; by animals in the sea, tortoise-shell; by the coverings of animals, the skins which the Seres dye, and the substance gathered from the hair of the she-goats of Arabia, which we have spoken of under the name of «ladanum»; by creatures that are common to both land and sea, the purple of the murex. With reference to the birds, beyond plumes for warriors' helmets, and the grease that is derived from the geese of Commagene, I find no remarkable product mentioned. We must not omit, too, to observe that gold, for which there is such a mania with all mankind, hardly holds the tenth rank as an object of value, and silver, with which we purchase gold, hardly the twentieth!

Hail to thee, Nature, thou parent of all things! and do thou deign to show thy favor unto me, who, alone of all the citizens of Rome, have in thy every department thus made known thy praise.

PLINY THE YOUNGER

(CAIUS PLINIUS CÆCILIUS SECUNDUS)

(61–113? A.D.)

Publius Cæcilius Secundus, as he was at first named, was in his eighteenth year when his uncle and guardian, the elder Pliny, perished in the eruption of Vesuvius, 79 A.D., leaving his fortune and his name to his ward. The boy had been carefully educated by his mother, and his other guardian, the noble Verginius Rufus, whose virtues he afterwards commemorated in one of his epistles. Rich, well born, well educated, Pliny rapidly rose to eminence in his profession as advocate, pleading not only in the courts, but also having a part in important cases before the Senate. Not content with professional success, however, he revised and published his speeches, and aspired to be equally eminent as a man of letters; in this and other matters (as he was not ashamed to admit) following the example of Cicero. More than once his letters record the anxious care which he and his friends bestowed upon the elaboration of his orations; but nothing of them has survived save one show-piece, the so-called 'Panegyricus,' in praise of his friend and patron the Emperor Trajan. This is an ornate and labored production, which scarcely excites regret that the rest have perished. There were not wanting friends to tell him that his style was too daring, and Macrobius is probably quite correct in assigning him to the luxuriant and florid type of oratory.

Pliny the Younger

Pliny's advancement in office was equally rapid,—too rapid, perhaps, since he owed much of his early success to the hated Domitian. He was quæstor in 89, tribune 91, prætor 93, and subsequently filled important posts connected with the Treasury. It seems, indeed, to have been his unusual ability as a financier which commended him; but he is careful to inform us that after Domitian's death, papers were found showing how narrowly Pliny had escaped the fate that overtook all virtue under that odious tyranny. In the year 100 his official career was crowned by an appointment as *consul suffectus* for the months of September and October; a consulship which he can hardly have enjoyed comparing with Cicero's. Some eleven years later he was sent as proconsul to the province of Pontus and Bithynia; and there, or shortly after his return to Rome, he seems to have died.

The nine books of 'Letters' on which his fame now rests were composed after the death of Domitian, and published at intervals from 97 to 109. A tenth book was subsequently added, containing his correspondence with Trajan while in his province, together with the Emperor's very business-like answers. In this last book occurs the famous letter concerning the Christians, probably the best-known passage in the entire collection. There can be little doubt that Pliny composed the vast majority of his epistles expressly for publication. It has been pointed out, for example, that only twice is any one of whom an unfavorable opinion is expressed, mentioned by name. Pliny, according to his own account, is the most gallant of husbands, the most amiable of friends; affectionate to all his relatives, generous to all his dependents, on the best of terms with all the world save Regulus;—and Regulus dies betimes. It is not hard for some readers of Pliny to vote him a prig, and to believe that his likeness to Cicero resides chiefly in his vanity and his weakness. And it is not easy for any one familiar with that period as depicted in the pages of Tacitus, Juvenal, and Suetonius, to recognize it when viewed from Pliny's standpoint. So much amiability in the writer, so much virtue in his friends, seem a trifle suspicious. But it would be unjust to consider Pliny a mere *poseur*,—a deliberate flatterer of himself or of his age. Amiable, clever, cultured, successful, he was disposed to look upon the bright side of men and things. He too had lived through the Reign of Terror, and can tell gloomy tales of men's baseness. But it is much to his credit that he prefers to record the good that survived to a happier epoch. Virtuous men and women, loyal friends, domestic happiness, were still to be found in Rome; and the many charming pictures drawn by Pliny are doubtless as free from exaggeration as the gloomy scenes painted by the more skillful brushes of his greater contemporaries.

While there is some attempt to observe chronological order in the arrangement of the letters, it is evident that the author has tried to heighten their attractiveness by varying his topics. With few exceptions each letter discusses but one subject, and the diction bears every mark of labored simplicity. The correspondence thus lacks that spontaneity and unconscious ease which are universally felt to be the highest charm of letter-writing,—those qualities which make so much of Cicero's correspondence a delight, and the lack of which makes Pope's letters a perpetual challenge to the reader's criticism. But though Pliny has not «snatched a grace beyond the reach of art,» he is nevertheless very good reading. The style may smack of artifice; but with the utmost good taste, good sense, and good humor, he tells us (apparently) all about himself, and very much about the age in which he lived. Literary gossip, anecdotes of famous or infamous characters, ghost stories; descriptions of his villas, his poems, his suppers, his uncle's library; the death of Martial, the eruption of Vesuvius, an invitation to dinner; the deterioration of the law courts, and the abuse of the ballot in the Senate; a plan to purchase an estate, to write an epic, to build a temple,—on these and a hundred other topics he affords us invaluable glimpses into the life of his day. He is sufficiently piquant, without being spiteful; sympathetic, without being sentimental; and while he can no longer be esteemed a genius, he is better loved and more widely known as a singularly pure man and a most entertaining companion.

It was as a genius, however, that he had hoped to live in the memory of posterity. The world of literature filled a large part of his thoughts; and there is no reason to suppose him insincere when he laments that his engagements, social and professional, prevent him from devoting all his strength to the «pursuit of immortality.» His uncle had been an indefatigable reader, writer, and collector of books. Among Pliny's teachers was Quintilian, the great rhetorician of the age. Tacitus was his intimate friend. He patronized Martial, and knew well Suetonius, Silius Italicus, and many other writers less important in our eyes, because their works have perished. We may agree with Juvenal that authors' readings must have been a deadly bore, but we need not conclude that Pliny was a hypocrite because he was untiring in his attendance upon them. His poems (as good, no doubt, as his model Cicero's), his orations, his narrative pieces, are repeatedly mentioned, and were evidently the subject of his most anxious thought. So generous a patron, so appreciative a friend, could hardly have lacked favorable critics; and he very cordially welcomes from his contemporaries any forestallment of the verdict which he hoped from posterity. Yet it must be admitted that his critical insight was quite good enough to rate his friends much as later ages have ranked them. The vast merits of Tactitus he fully recognized, and was unfeignedly glad to have his name coupled with the great historian's as an eminent literary character. Of Silius Italicus, on the other hand, he remarks that «he used to write verses with more diligence than force,»—a criticism which very few have been found to dispute. On other topics than literature, moreover, Pliny was often in striking agreement with modern sentiment. His humanity, even affection, for his slaves; his politeness to his dependents, his appreciation of the beauties of nature, his generous promotion of public education,—in these and other matters he is surprisingly unlike the average of his countrymen. No doubt he has idealized his own portrait, but we may well be grateful to the artist for such an ideal.

The facts of Pliny's life have been fully discussed by Mommsen, ('Hermes,' iii. 108). There is a good biography by Church and Brodribb ('Ancient Classics for English Readers'), which was made the occasion of an especially good article on Pliny in the Westminster Review, Vol. 47, 1875. There is no complete (modern) edition with English notes; but there are good selections by J. E. B. Mayor, (Book iii.), Pritchard and Bernard, and others. Of the German editions, M. Döring, 2 vols., 1843, is recommended. There is a very faithful translation in English by Lewis (Trübner, 1879), and a more readable version in Johnsonese by Melmoth, revised by Bosanquet for the Bohn series (Bell and Sons).

PORTRAIT OF A RIVAL

I often tell you that there is a certain force of character about Regulus: it is wonderful how he carries through what he has set his mind to. He chose lately to be extremely concerned for the loss of his son; accordingly he mourned for him as never man mourned before. He took it into his head to have an immense number of statues and pictures of him; immediately all the artisans in Rome are set to work. Canvas, wax, brass, silver, gold, ivory, marble, all exhibit the figure of the young Regulus. Not long ago he read before a numerous audience a memoir of his son;—a memoir of a mere boy! however, he read it. He wrote likewise a sort of circular letter to the several decurii, desiring them to choose out one of their order who had a strong clear voice, to read this eulogy to the people; it has been actually done. Now had this force of character, or whatever else you may call a fixed determination in obtaining whatever one has a mind for, been rightly applied, what infinite good it might have effected! The misfortune is, there is less of this quality about good people than about bad people; and as ignorance begets rashness, and thoughtfulness produces deliberation, so modesty is apt to cripple the action of virtue, whilst confidence strengthens vice. Regulus is a case in point: he has a weak voice, an awkward delivery, an indistinct utterance, a slow imagination, and no memory; in a word, he possesses nothing but a sort of frantic energy; and yet, by the assistance of a flighty turn and much impudence, he passes as an orator. Herennius Senecio admirably reversed Cato's definition of an orator, and applied it to Regulus: «An orator,» he said, «is a bad man, unskilled in the art of speaking.» And really Cato's definition is not a more exact description of a true orator than Senecio's is of the character of this man. Would you make me a suitable return for this letter? Let me know if you, or any of my friends in your town, have, like a stroller in the market-place, read this doleful production of Regulus's, «raising,» as Demosthenes says, «your voice most merrily, and straining every muscle in your throat.» For so absurd a performance must excite laughter rather than compassion; and indeed the composition is as puerile as the subject. Farewell.

TO MINUTIUS FUNDANUS: HOW TIME PASSES AT ROME

From the 'Letters'

When one considers how the time passes at Rome, one cannot be surprised that, take any single day, and it either is, or at least seems to be, spent reasonably enough; and yet, upon casting up the whole sum, the amount will appear quite otherwise. Ask any one, «What have you been doing to-day?» He will tell you perhaps, «I have been at the ceremony of putting on the *toga virilis;* I attended a wedding; one man begged me to be witness to his will; another to attend the hearing of his case; a third called me in to a consultation.» These things seem important enough whilst one is about them; yet, when you reflect at your leisure that every day has been thus employed, they seem mere trifles. At such a time one is apt to think to oneself, «How much of my life I have frittered away in dull, useless, routine sort of work.» At least it is a reflection which frequently comes across me at Laurentum, after I have been doing a little reading and writing, and taking care of the animal machine (for the body must be supported if we would keep the mind alert and vigorous). There I neither hear nor speak anything I have occasion to be sorry for. No one talks scandal to me, and I find fault with nobody,—unless myself, when I am dissatisfied with my compositions. There I live undisturbed by rumor, and free from the anxious solicitudes of hope and fear, conversing only with myself and my books. True and genuine life! Sweet and honorable repose! More, perhaps, to be desired than employments of any kind! Thou solemn sea and solitary shore, true and most retired school of art and poetry, with how many noble thoughts do you inspire me! Snatch then, my friend, as I have, the first opportunity of leaving the town with its din, its empty bustle and laborious trifles, and devote your days to study or to repose; for as Attilius happily observed, «It is better to have nothing to do than to be doing nothing.» Farewell.

TO SOCIUS SENECIO: THE LAST CROP OF POETS

From the ‹Letters›

This year has produced a plentiful crop of poets: during the whole month of April, scarcely a day has passed on which we have not been entertained with the recital of some poem. It is a pleasure to me to find that a taste for polite literature still exists, and that men of genius *do* come forward and make themselves known, notwithstanding the lazy attendance they get for their pains. The greater part of the audience sit in the lounging-places, gossip away their time there, and are perpetually sending to inquire whether the author has made his entrance yet, whether he has got through the preface, or whether he has almost finished the piece. Then at length they saunter in with an air of the greatest indifference; nor do they condescend to stay through the recital, but go out before it is over, some slyly and stealthily, others again with perfect freedom and unconcern. And yet our fathers can remember how Claudius Cæsar walking one day in the palace, and hearing a great shouting, inquired the cause; and being informed that Nonianus was reciting a composition of his, went immediately to the place, and agreeably surprised the author with his presence. But now, were one to bespeak the attendance of the idlest man living, and remind him of the appointment ever so often, or ever so long beforehand, either he would not come at all, or if he did, would grumble about having «lost a day!» for no other reason but because he had *not* lost it. So much the more do *those* authors deserve our encouragement and applause who have resolution to persevere in their studies, and to read out their compositions in spite of this apathy or arrogance on the part of their audience. Myself indeed, I scarcely ever miss being present upon any occasion; though, to tell the truth, the authors have generally been friends of mine, as indeed there are few men of literary tastes who are not. It is this which has kept me in town longer than I had intended. I am now, however, at liberty to go back into the country and write something myself: which I do not intend reciting, lest I should seem rather to have *lent* than given my attendance to these recitations of my friends; for in these, as in all other good offices, the obligation ceases the moment you seem to expect a return. Farewell.

TO NEPOS: OF ARRIA

From the ‹Letters›

I HAVE constantly observed that amongst the deeds and sayings of illustrious persons of either sex, some have made more noise in the world, whilst others have been really greater, although less talked about; and I am confirmed in this opinion by a conversation I had yesterday with Fannia. This lady is granddaughter to that celebrated Arria, who animated her husband to meet death by her own glorious example. She informed me of several particulars relating to Arria, no less heroic than this applauded action of hers, though taken less notice of; and I think you will be as surprised to read the account of them as I was to hear it. Her husband Cæcinna Pætus, and her son, were both attacked at the same time with a fatal illness, as was supposed; of which the son died,—a youth of remarkable beauty, and as modest as he was comely, endeared indeed to his parents no less by his many graces than from the fact of his being their son. His mother prepared his funeral and conducted the usual ceremonies so privately that Pætus did not know of his death. Whenever she came into his room, she pretended her son was alive and actually better; and as often as he inquired after his health, would answer, «He has had a good rest, and eaten his food with quite an appetite.» Then when she found the tears she had so long kept back gushing forth in spite of herself, she would leave the room, and having given vent to her grief, return with dry eyes and a serene countenance, as though she had dismissed every feeling of bereavement at the door of her husband's chamber. I must confess it was a brave action in her to draw the steel, plunge it into her breast, pluck out the dagger and present it to her husband with that ever memorable, I had almost said that divine, expression, «Pætus, it is not painful.» But when she spoke and acted thus, she had the prospect of glory and immortality before her; how far greater, without the support of any such animating motives, to hide her tears, to conceal her grief, and cheerfully to act the mother when a mother no more!

Scribonianus had taken up arms against Claudius in Illyria, where he lost his life; and Pætus, who was of his party, was brought prisoner to Rome. When they were going to put him on board ship, Arria besought the soldiers that she might be permitted to attend him: «For surely,» she urged, «you will allow a man of consular rank some servants to dress him, attend on him at meals, and put his shoes on for him; but if you will take me, I alone will perform all these offices.» Her request was refused; upon which she hired a fishing-boat, and in that small vessel followed the ship. On her return to Rome, meeting the wife of Scribonianus in the emperor's palace, at the time when this woman voluntarily gave evidence against the conspirators,—«What,» she exclaimed, «shall I hear you even speak to me? you, on whose bosom your husband Scribonianus was murdered, and yet you survive him!»—an expression which plainly shows that the noble manner in which she put an end to her life was no unpremeditated effect of sudden passion. Moreover, when Thrasea, her son-in-law, was endeavoring to dissuade her from her purpose of destroying herself, and amongst other arguments which he used, said to her, «Would you then advise your daughter to die with me if my life were to be taken from me?» «Most certainly I would,» she replied, «if she had lived as long and in as much harmony with you, as I have with my Pætus.» This answer greatly increased the alarm of her family, and made them watch her for the future more narrowly; which when she perceived, «It is of no use,» she said: «you may oblige me to effect my death in a more painful way, but it is impossible you should prevent it.» Saying this, she sprang from her chair, and running her head with the utmost violence against the wall, fell down, to all appearance dead; but being brought to herself again, «I told you,» she said, «if you would not suffer me to take an easy path to death, I should find a way to it, however hard.» Now, is there not, my friend, something much greater in all this than in the so-much-talked-of « Pætus, it is not painful,» to which these led the way? And yet this last is the favorite topic of fame, while all the former are passed over in silence. Whence I cannot but infer, what I observed at the beginning of my letter, that some actions are more celebrated, whilst others are really greater.

TO MARCELLINUS: DEATH OF FUNDANUS'S DAUGHTER

From the ‹Letters›

I WRITE this to you in the deepest sorrow: the youngest daughter of my friend Fundanus is dead! I have never seen a more cheerful and more lovable girl, or one who better deserved to have enjoyed a long—I had almost said an immortal—life! She was scarcely fourteen, and yet there was in her a wisdom far beyond her years, a matronly gravity united with girlish sweetness and virgin bashfulness. With what an endearing fondness did she hang on her father's neck! How affectionately and modestly she used to greet us his friends! With what a tender and deferential regard she used to treat her nurses, tutors, teachers, each in their respective offices! What an eager, industrious, intelligent reader she was! She took few amusements, and those with caution. How self-controlled, how patient, how brave she was, under her last illness! She complied with all the directions of her physicians; she spoke cheerful, comforting words to her sister and her father; and when all her bodily strength was exhausted, the vigor of her mind sustained her. That indeed continued even to her last moments, unbroken by the pain of a long illness, or the terrors of approaching death; and it is a reflection which makes us miss her, and grieve that she has gone from us, the more. Oh, melancholy, untimely loss, too truly! She was engaged to an excellent young man; the wedding day was fixed, and we were all invited. How our joy has been turned into sorrow! I cannot express in words the inward pain I felt when I heard Fundanus himself (as grief is ever finding out fresh circumstances to aggravate its affliction) ordering the money he had intended laying out upon clothes, pearls, and jewels for her marriage, to be employed in frankincense, ointments, and perfumes for her funeral. He is a man of great learning and good sense, who has applied himself from his earliest youth to the deeper studies and the fine arts; but all the maxims of fortitude which he has received from books, or advanced himself, he now absolutely rejects, and every other virtue of his heart gives place to all a parent's tenderness. You will excuse, you will even approve, his grief, when you consider what he has lost. He has lost a daughter who resembled him in his manners, as well as his person, and exactly copied out all her father. So, if you should think proper to write to him upon the subject of so reasonable a grief, let me remind you not to use the rougher arguments of consolation, and such as seem to carry a sort of reproof with them, but those of kind and sympathizing humanity. Time will render him more open to the dictates of reason; for as a fresh wound shrinks back from the hand of the surgeon, but by degrees submits to, and even seeks of its own accord, the means of its cure, so a mind under the first impression of a misfortune shuns and rejects all consolations, but at length desires and is lulled by their gentle application. Farewell.

TO CALPURNIA

From the ‹Letters›

NEVER was business more disagreeable to me than when it prevented me not only from accompanying you when you went into Campania for your health, but from following you there soon after; for I want particularly to be with you now, that I may learn from my own eyes whether you are growing stronger and stouter, and whether the tranquillity, the amusements, and the plenty of that charming country really agree with you. Were you in perfect health, yet I could ill support your absence; for even a moment's uncertainty of the welfare of those we tenderly love causes a feeling of suspense and anxiety: but now your sickness conspires with your absence to trouble me grievously with vague and various anxieties. I dread everything, fancy everything, and as is natural to those who fear, conjure up the very things that I most dread. Let me the more earnestly entreat you then to think of my anxiety, and write to me every day, and even twice a day: I shall be more easy, at least while I am reading your letters, though when I have read them, I shall immediately feel my fears again. Farewell.

TO TACITUS: THE ERUPTION OF VESUVIUS

From the ‹Letters›

YOUR request that I would send you an account of my uncle's death, in order to transmit a more exact relation of it to posterity, deserves my acknowledgments; for if this accident shall be celebrated by your pen, the glory of it, I am well assured, will be rendered for ever illustrious. And notwithstanding he perished by a misfortune which, as it involved at the same time a most beautiful country in ruins, and destroyed so many populous cities, seems to promise him an everlasting remembrance; notwithstanding he has himself composed many and lasting works: yet I am persuaded the mentioning of him in your immortal writings will greatly contribute to render his name immortal. Happy I esteem those to be to whom by provision of the gods has been granted the ability either to do such actions as are worthy of being related or to relate them in a manner worthy of being read: but peculiarly happy are they who are blessed with both these uncommon talents; in the number of which my uncle, as his own writings and your history will evidently prove, may justly be ranked. It is with extreme willingness, therefore, that I execute your commands; and should indeed have claimed the task if you had not enjoined it. He was at that time with the fleet under his command at Misenum. On the 24th of August, about one in the afternoon, my mother desired him to observe a cloud which appeared of a very unusual size and shape. He had just taken a turn in the sun, and after bathing himself in cold water, and making a light luncheon, gone back to his books: he immediately arose and went out upon a rising ground, from whence he might get a better sight of this very uncommon appearance. A cloud, from which mountain was uncertain at this distance (but it was found afterwards to come from Mount Vesuvius), was ascending, the appearance of which I cannot give you a more exact description of than by likening it to that of a pine-tree; for it shot up to a great height in the form of a very tall trunk, which spread itself out at the top into a sort of branches,—occasioned, I imagine, either by a sudden gust of air that impelled it, the force of which decreased as it advanced upwards, or the cloud itself being pressed back again by its own weight, expanded in the manner I have mentioned; it appeared sometimes bright and sometimes dark and spotted, according as it was either more or less impregnated with earth and cinders. This phenomenon seemed, to a man of such learning and research as my uncle, extraordinary and worth further looking into. He ordered a light vessel to be got ready, and gave me leave, if I liked, to accompany him. I said I had rather go on with my work; and it so happened he had himself given me something to write out. As he was coming out of the house he received a note from Rectina, the wife of Bassus, who was in the utmost alarm at the imminent danger which threatened her; for, her villa lying at the foot of Mount Vesuvius, there was no way of escape but by sea; she earnestly entreated him therefore to come to her assistance. He accordingly changed his first intention, and what he had begun from a philosophical, he now carried out in a noble and generous spirit. He ordered the galleys to put to sea, and went himself on board with an intention of assisting not only Rectina, but the several other towns which lay thickly strewn along that beautiful coast. Hastening then to the place from whence others fled with the utmost terror, he steered his course direct to the point of danger, and with so much calmness and presence of mind as to be able to make and dictate his observations upon the motion and all the phenomena of that dreadful scene. He was now so close to the mountain that the cinders, which grew thicker and hotter the nearer he approached, fell into the ships, together with pumice-stones and black pieces of burning rock; they were in danger too not only of being aground by the sudden retreat of the sea, but also from the vast fragments which rolled down from the mountain and obstructed all the shore. Here he stopped to consider whether he should turn back again; to which the pilot advising him, «Fortune,» said he, «favors the brave: steer to where Pomponianus is.» Pomponianus was then at Stabiæ, separated by a bay which the sea, after several insensible windings, forms with the shore. He had already sent his baggage on board; for though he was not at that time in actual danger, yet being within sight of it, and indeed extremely near if it should in the least increase, he was determined to put to sea as soon as the wind, which was blowing dead in-shore, should go down. It was favorable, however, for carrying my uncle to Pomponianus, whom he found in the greatest consternation: he embraced him tenderly, encouraging and urging him to keep up his spirits; and the more effectually to soothe his fears by seeming unconcerned himself, ordered a bath to be got ready, and then, after having bathed, sat down to supper with great cheerfulness, or at least (what is just as heroic) with every appearance of it. Meanwhile broad flames shone out in several places from Mount Vesuvius, which the darkness of the night contributed to render still brighter and clearer. But my uncle, in order to soothe the apprehensions of his friend, assured him it was only the burning of the villages, which the country people had abandoned to the flames: after this he retired to rest, and it is most certain he was so little disquieted as to fall into a sound sleep; for his breathing, which on account of his corpulence was rather heavy and sonorous, was heard by the attendants outside. The court which led to his apartment being now almost filled with stones and ashes, if he had continued there any time longer it would have been impossible for him to make his way out. So he was awoke and got up, and went to Pomponianus and the rest of his company, who were feeling too anxious to think of going to bed. They consulted together whether it would be most prudent to trust to the houses — which now rocked from side to side with frequent and violent concussions, as though shaken from their very foundations — or fly to the open fields, where the calcined stones and cinders, though light indeed, yet fell in large showers and threatened destruction. In this choice of dangers they resolved for the fields; a resolution which, while the rest of the company were hurried into it by their fears, my uncle embraced upon cool and deliberate consideration. They went out then, having pillows tied upon their heads with napkins; and this was their whole defense against the storm of stones that fell round them. It was now day everywhere else, but *there* a deeper darkness prevailed than in the thickest night; which however was in some degree alleviated by torches and other lights of various kinds. They thought proper to go farther down upon the shore to see if they might safely put out to sea, but found the waves still running extremely high and boisterous. There my uncle, laying himself down upon a sail-cloth, which was spread for him, called twice for some cold water, which he drank; when immediately the flames, preceded by a strong whiff of sulphur, dispersed the rest of the party and obliged him to rise. He raised himself up with the assistance of two of his servants, and instantly fell down dead; suffocated, as I conjecture, by some gross and noxious vapor; having always had a weak throat, which was often inflamed. As soon as it was light again, which was not till the third day after this melancholy accident, his body was found entire, and without any marks of violence upon it, in the dress in which he fell, and looking more like a man asleep than dead. . . . Farewell.

TO CALPURNIA

From the ‹Letters›

You will not believe what a longing for you possesses me. The chief cause of this is my love; and then we have not grown used to be apart. So it comes to pass that I lie awake a great part of the night, thinking of you; and that by day, when the hours return at which I was wont to visit you, my feet take me, as it is so truly said, to your chamber; but not finding you there, I return, sick and sad at heart, like an excluded lover. The only time that is free from these torments is when I am being worn out at the bar, and in the suits of my friends. Judge you what must be my life when I find my repose in toil, my solace in wretchedness and anxiety. Farewell.

TO MAXIMUS: PLINY'S SUCCESS AS AN AUTHOR

From the ‹Letters›

It has frequently happened, as I have been pleading before the Court of the Hundred, that those venerable judges, after having preserved for a long period the gravity and solemnity suitable to their character, have suddenly, as though urged by irresistible impulse, risen up to a man and applauded me. I have often likewise gained as much glory in the Senate as my utmost wishes could desire; but I never felt a more sensible pleasure than by an account which I lately received from Cornelius Tacitus. He informed me that at the last Circensian games he sat next to a Roman knight, who, after conversation had passed between them upon various points of learning, asked him, «Are you an Italian or a provincial?» Tacitus replied, «Your acquaintance with literature must surely have informed you who I am.» «Pray, then, is it Tacitus or Pliny I am talking with?» I cannot express how highly I am pleased to find that our names are not so much the proper appellatives of men as a kind of distinction for learning herself; and that eloquence renders us known to those who would otherwise be ignorant of us. An accident of the same kind happened to me a few days ago. Fabius Rufinus, a person of distinguished merit, was placed next to me at table; and below him a countryman of his, who had just then come to Rome for the first time. Rufinus, calling his friend's attention to me, said to him, "You see this man?" and entered into a conversation upon the subject of my pursuits; to whom the other immediately replied, "This must undoubtedly be Pliny." To confess the truth, I look upon these instances as a very considerable recompense of my labors. If Demosthenes had reason to be pleased with the old woman of Athens crying out, "This is Demosthenes!" may not I, then, be allowed to congratulate myself upon the celebrity my name has acquired? Yes, my friend, I will rejoice in it, and without scruple admit that I do. As I only mention the judgment of others, not my own, I am not afraid of incurring the censure of vanity; especially from you, who, whilst envying no man's reputation, are particularly zealous for mine. Farewell.

TO FUSCUS: A DAY IN THE COUNTRY

From the 'Letters'

You want to know how I portion out my day in my summer villa at Tuscum? I get up just when I please; generally about sunrise, often earlier, but seldom later than this. I keep the shutters closed, as darkness and silence wonderfully promote meditation. Thus free and abstracted from those outward objects which dissipate attention, I am left to my own thoughts; nor suffer my mind to wander with my eyes, but keep my eyes in subjection to my mind, which, when they are not distracted by a multiplicity of external objects, see nothing but what the imagination represents to them. If I have any work in hand, this is the time I choose for thinking it out, word for word, even to the minutest accuracy of expression. In this way I compose more or less, according as the subject is more or less difficult and I find myself able to retain it. I then call my secretary, and opening the shutters, dictate to him what I have put into shape; after which I dismiss him, then call him in again and again dismiss him. About ten or eleven o'clock (for I do not observe one fixed hour), according to the weather, I either walk upon my terrace or in the covered portico, and there I continue to meditate or dictate what remains upon the subject in which I am engaged. This completed, I get into my chariot, where I employ myself as before, when I was walking or in my study; and find this change of scene refreshes and keeps up my attention. On my return home I take a little nap, then a walk, and after that repeat out loud and distinctly some Greek or Latin speech, not so much for the sake of strengthening my voice as my digestion; though indeed the voice at the same time is strengthened by this practice. I then take another walk, am anointed, do my exercises, and go into the bath. At supper, if I have only my wife or a few friends with me, some author is read to us; and after supper we are entertained either with music or an interlude. When that is finished I take my walk with my family, among whom I am not without some scholars. Thus we pass our evenings in varied conversation; and the day, even when at the longest, steals imperceptibly away. Upon some occasions I change the order in certain of the articles above mentioned. For instance, if I have studied longer or walked more than usual, after my second sleep and reading a speech or two aloud, instead of using my chariot I get on horseback; by which means I insure as much exercise and lose less time. The visits of my friends from the neighboring villages claim some part of the day; and sometimes, by an agreeable interruption, they come in very seasonably to relieve me when I am feeling tired. I now and then amuse myself with hunting; but always take my tablets into the field, that if I should meet with no game, I may at least bring home something. Part of my time, too (though not so much as they desire), is allotted to my tenants; whose rustic complaints, along with these city occupations, make my literary studies still more delightful to me. Farewell.

TO THE EMPEROR TRAJAN: OF THE CHRISTIANS

From the ‹Letters›

It is my invariable rule, sir, to refer to you in all matters where I feel doubtful; for who is more capable of removing my scruples, or informing my ignorance? Having never been present at any trials concerning those who profess Christianity, I am unacquainted not only with the nature of their crimes, or the measure of their punishment, but how far it is proper to enter into an examination concerning them. Whether, therefore, any difference is usually made with respect to ages, or no distinction is to be observed between the young and the adult; whether repentance entitles them to a pardon, or if a man has been once a Christian it avails nothing to desist from his error; whether the very profession of Christianity, unattended with any criminal act, or only the crimes themselves inherent in the profession, are punishable,—on all these points I am in great doubt. In the mean while, the method I have observed towards those who have been brought before me as Christians is this: I asked them whether they were Christians: if they admitted it, I repeated the question twice and threatened them with punishment; if they persisted, I ordered them to be at once punished,—for I was persuaded, whatever the nature of their opinions might be, a contumacious and inflexible obstinacy certainly deserved correction. There were others also brought before me possessed with the same infatuation; but being Roman citizens, I directed them to be sent to Rome. But this crime spreading (as is usually the case), while it was actually under prosecution several instances of the same nature occurred. An anonymous information was laid before me, containing a charge against several persons, who upon examination denied they were Christians, or had ever been so. They repeated after me an invocation to the gods, and offered religious rites with wine and incense before your statue (which for that purpose I had ordered to be brought, together with those of the gods), and even reviled the name of Christ; whereas there is no forcing, it is said, those who are really Christians into any of these compliances: I thought it proper, therefore, to discharge them. Some among those who were accused by a witness in person at first confessed themselves Christians, but immediately after denied it; the rest owned indeed that they had been of that number formerly, but had now (some above three, others more, and a few above twenty years ago) renounced that error. They all worshiped your statue and the images of the gods, uttering imprecations at the same time against the name of Christ. They affirmed that the whole of their guilt, or their error, was, that they met on a stated day before it was light, and addressed a form of prayer to Christ as to a divinity, binding themselves by a solemn oath, not for the purpose of any wicked design, but never to commit any fraud, theft, or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called on to deliver it up; after which it was their custom to separate, and then reassemble, to eat in common a harmless meal. From this custom, however, they desisted after the publication of my edict, by which, according to your commands, I forbade the meeting of any assemblies. After receiving this account I judged it so much the more necessary to endeavor to extort the real truth, by putting two female slaves to the torture, who were said to officiate in their religious rites; but all I could discover was evidence of an absurd and extravagant superstition. I deemed it expedient therefore to adjourn all further proceedings, in order to consult you. For it appears to be a matter highly deserving your consideration, more especially as great numbers must be involved in the danger of these prosecutions, which have already extended, and are still likely to extend, to persons of all ranks and ages, and even of both sexes. In fact, this contagious superstition is not confined to the cities only, but has spread its infection among the neighboring villages and country. Nevertheless, it still seems possible to restrain its progress. The temples, at least, which were once almost deserted, begin now to be frequented; and the sacred rites, after a long intermission, are again revived; while there is a general demand for the victims, which till lately found very few purchasers. From all this it is easy to conjecture what numbers might be reclaimed if a general pardon were granted to those who shall repent of their error.

[The answer of the Emperor to Pliny was as follows:—]

You have adopted the right course, my dearest Secundus, in investigating the charges against the Christians who were brought before you. It is not possible to lay down any general rule for all such cases. Do not go out of your way to look for them. If indeed they should be brought before you, and the crime is proved, they must be punished; with the restriction, however, that where the party denies he is a Christian, and shall make it evident that he is not, by invoking our gods, let him (notwithstanding any former suspicion) be pardoned upon his repentance. Anonymous informations ought not to be received in any sort of prosecution. It is introducing a very dangerous precedent, and is quite foreign to the spirit of our age.

PLUTARCH

(About 50–120 A. D.)

BY EDWARD BULL CLAPP

"Study your Plutarch, and paint," said the great French classicist to his pupil. The advice was sound; for though the unequaled literature of Greece boasts of many names more illustrious than Plutarch's for original genius and power, yet the world in general has drawn from him, more than from any other source, its conception of the heroic men of Greece and Rome. "He was one of Plutarch's men," is the eulogy often spoken over the grave of some statesman or general whose rugged grandeur of character seems to harmonize with the splendid portraits drawn for us by the old Greek biographer. And so, although this author does not occupy the very highest place either as philosopher or historian, yet there are few ancient writers who are more interesting or important than he.

We know but little of his life. He was born about half a century after the beginning of our era, at Chæronea in Bœotia; a portion of Hellas popularly credited with intellectual dullness, though the names of Pindar and Epaminondas go far to vindicate its fame. He seems to have spent some time at Rome, and in other parts of Italy; but he returned to Greece in his later years, closing his life about the year 120. He thus lived under the Roman emperors from Nero to Trajan, and was contemporary with Tacitus and the Plinys. It is remarkable, however, that he does not quote from any of the great Romans of his time; nor do they, in turn, make any mention of him.

Greece had at this time long since lost her political independence. Even in literature her creative genius had spent itself, and in its place had come the period of elegant finish and laborious scholarship. Alexandria, which had supplanted Athens as the intellectual centre of the world, was now herself beginning to yield precedence to all-conquering Rome. Theocritus, the last Greek poet of the highest rank, had died nearly three centuries before, while Lucian, the gifted reviver of Attic prose, was yet to come. The only other Greek writer of this period whose works have been widely popular was the Hebrew Josephus, who was a few years older than Plutarch.

Born of a wealthy and respected family, and living the peaceful and happy life of the scholar and writer, Plutarch was the faithful exponent of the literary tendencies in his time. His knowledge of Greek literature was apparently boundless; and his writings are enriched by numerous quotations, many of which are from works which are lost to us, so that these remnants are of the greatest value. In all that he wrote we see the evidence of a mind well stocked with the varied learning of his day, interested and curious about a great variety of problems, fond of moral and philosophical reflections, but not the originator of new views, nor even the advocate of any distinct system in philosophy. We admire his sweetness and purity of character, his culture of mind and heart, and his wide knowledge of men and life, rather than the depth of his thought or the soaring height of his genius.

The writings of Plutarch fall naturally into two classes: the historical and the ethical. The chief work in the first class is the ‹Parallel Lives,› consisting of forty-six biographies arranged in pairs, the life of a Greek being followed in each case by the life of a Roman. Nineteen of these double biographies are accompanied in our text by comparisons of the two characters depicted, though these are probably spurious, and not the work of Plutarch. In this juxtaposition of the great men of the conquered and the conquering race we recognize the patriotic pride of the Greek biographer. Living at a time when his country was in servitude to Rome, he delighted in showing that Greece too, in her palmy days, had produced warriors and statesmen who were worthy to stand in company with the men who had made Rome the mistress of the world. In the selection of his pairs Plutarch was guided, to some extent at least, by a real or fancied resemblance in the public careers of his heroes. Thus he groups together Theseus and Romulus as legendary founders of States, Lycurgus and Numa Pompilius as mythical legislators, Demosthenes and Cicero as orators and statesmen. But in many cases, it must be confessed, the resemblance is slight or entirely wanting.

As a writer of biography the world has scarcely seen the superior of Plutarch. To be sure, his methods of historical research were not severely critical, and modern scholars are forced to use his statements with some degree of caution. But it is biography that he means to write, and not history; and his clear conception of the difference in spirit between the two forms of composition has done much to give his ‹Lives› their boundless popularity. His purpose was to portray character rather than narrate events. For this purpose the many personal touches which he introduces, the anecdotes which he repeats without too close a scrutiny, are of more value than many pages of meaningless events, however accurately told. He distinctly states in his life of Nicias that he will pass over much that is told by Thucydides, while he endeavors to «gather and propound things not commonly marked and known, which will serve, I doubt not, to decipher the man and his nature.» None of Plutarch's anecdotes are empty or pointless. They always help to light up the character which he is describing, and many of them are treasures which we could ill afford to spare.

But besides these bits of personal character, Plutarch abounds in grand historical pictures of a sober eloquence, which touches us all the more because of the severe self-restraint which the writer never lays aside. He never strives for pathos or dramatic effect; and when he thrills his reader it is the result of a passionate earnestness, like that of Thucydides, which cannot be concealed.

In the light of what has been said, it is easy to understand why the 'Lives' has been perhaps the most widely beloved among all the literary treasures of Greece. Statesmen and generals, poets and philosophers, alike have expressed their admiration for this book, and the traces of its influence are to be found everywhere in modern literature.

The English translation by Sir Thomas North, published in 1579, though it was not made from the original Greek, but from the great French version of Amyot, and though it abounds in errors, is yet a work of the utmost importance, both as a specimen of vigorous and racy English, and because it is the channel through which Plutarch became known to the writers of the Elizabethan age, and especially to Shakespeare. Shakespeare knew no Greek, and his acquaintance with Plutarch, and through him with the spirit of ancient life, must be due chiefly to Sir Thomas North. Three of his greatest plays, 'Coriolanus,' 'Julius Cæsar,' and 'Antony and Cleopatra,' are based on the 'Lives' to such an extent that it is not too much to say that they would not have been written had not Shakespeare made the acquaintance of the old Greek biographer. This is especially true of 'Julius Cæsar,' in which not merely are the incidents due to Plutarch, but even much of the language is suggested by Sir Thomas North. Many other English writers have given us pictures of ancient life, whose inspiration is plainly drawn from the same abundant source.

As hinted above, Plutarch is not a critical historian according to modern standards. He does not reach even the plane of historical accuracy attained by Thucydides or Polybius. But he evidently consulted the best authorities accessible to him, and used them with conscientious diligence. We must admit that numerous errors and contradictions in details have been found in his biographies; and in particular, his comprehension of Roman politics seems not always to be clear. But in the portrayal of character he is always effective and usually correct. Only in his attack upon Herodotus (in the 'Moralia') for partiality in favor of Athens, he is influenced by his Bœotian patriotism to do injustice to his great predecessor. (The authenticity of this tract is much disputed.)

Of Plutarch's ‹Moralia,› or moral essays, we must speak more briefly. This vast collection, of more than sixty treatises upon a great variety of subjects, has not received of late the attention which it deserves. The subjects treated are ethical, literary, and historical; and they are illustrated with a wealth of anecdote and quotation unequaled even in the ‹Lives.› In these charming essays the Greek author appears as the serene scholar, the experienced and philosophic observer, throwing light on each subject he touches, and delighting the reader with wise reflection and with quaint and unusual learning. Among the most interesting portions of the ‹Morals,› are the essays on the Late Vengeance of the Deity, the Education of Children, the Right Way of Hearing Poetry, on Superstition, and the so-called Consolation to Apollonius (on the death of his son). But Plutarch treats also of more obscure and recondite subjects, such as the Dæmon of Socrates, the Cessation of Oracles, Isis and Osiris, and others. Indeed, it would be necessary to quote the whole list of titles of the essays in order to give an adequate conception of their diversity of subject, and the wide scope of knowledge which they display. No ancient writer shows so complete a command of Greek literature and history, combined with so rich a fund of information bearing upon religion, philosophy, and social life. The style of these essays is scarcely less admirable than their matter; for while sometimes rugged and involved, it is never marred by affectation or straining for effect.

It is inevitable to compare Plutarch, in the ‹Morals,› with Seneca, who was only fifty years his senior; but the Greek appears to the better advantage in the comparison. While Seneca is often prosy and tiresome, Plutarch is always genial and sympathetic; and his genuine nobility of sentiment and moral feeling is far more attractive than the somewhat formal sermonizing of the Roman Stoic. Nor can we forget that Seneca was the supple minister of one of the worst of the Roman emperors, while Plutarch's life is free from the smallest taint of insincerity.

In many aspects Plutarch suggests Montaigne, who was one of his most sympathetic readers. The witty Frenchman was perhaps his superior in originality and point; but Plutarch far excels his modern admirer in elevation of thought and purity of tone. Yet no one has praised Plutarch more worthily, or more sincerely, than Montaigne. «We dunces had been lost,» he says, «had not this book raised us out of the dust. By this favor of his we dare now speak and write. 'Tis our breviary.»

Edward Bull Clapp.

PERICLES

From the ‹Lives of Illustrious Men.› Reprinted with the approval of Little, Brown & Co., publishers

Pericles was of the tribe Acamantis and the township of Cholargus, of the noblest birth both on his father's and mother's side. Xanthippus, his father, who defeated the King of Persia's generals in the battle at Mycale, took to wife Agariste, the grandchild of Clisthenes,—who drove out the sons of Pisistratus and nobly put an end to their tyrannical usurpation, and moreover, made a body of laws and settled a model of government admirably tempered and suited for the harmony and safety of the people.

His mother, being near her time, fancied in a dream that she was brought to bed of a lion; and a few days after was delivered of Pericles, in other respects perfectly formed, only his head was somewhat longish and out of proportion. For which reason almost all the images and statues that were made of him have the head covered with a helmet, the workmen apparently being willing not to expose him. The poets of Athens called him *Schinocephalos*, or squill-head, from *schinos*, a squill or sea-onion.

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The master that taught him music, most authors are agreed, was Damon (whose name, they say, ought to be pronounced with the first syllable short). Though Aristotle tells us that he was thoroughly practiced in all accomplishments of this kind by Pythoclides, Damon, it is not unlikely, being a sophist, out of policy sheltered himself under the profession of music to conceal from people in general his skill in other things; and under this pretense attended Pericles, the young athlete of politics, so to say, as his training-master in these exercises. Damon's lyre, however, did not prove altogether a successful blind; he was banished the country by ostracism for ten years, as a dangerous intermeddler and a favorer of arbitrary power; and by this means gave the stage occasion to play upon him. As, for instance, Plato the comic poet introduces a character, who questions him:

«Tell me, if you please,
Since you're the Chiron who taught Pericles.»

Pericles also was a hearer of Zeno the Eleatic, who treated of natural philosophy in the same manner Parmenides did, but had also perfected himself in an art of his own for refuting and silencing opponents in argument; as Timon of Phlius describes it,—

«Also the two-edged tongue of mighty Zeno, who,
Say what one would, could argue it untrue.»

But he that saw most of Pericles, and furnished him most especially with a weight and grandeur of intellect superior to all arts of popularity, and in general gave him his elevation and sublimity of purpose and of character, was Anaxagoras of Clazomenæ, whom the men of those times called by the name of Nous,—that is, mind or intelligence;—whether in admiration of the great and extraordinary gift he displayed for the science of nature, or because he was the first of the philosophers who did not refer the first ordering of the world to fortune or chance, nor to necessity or compulsion, but to a pure, unadulterated intelligence, which in all other existing mixed and compound things acts as a principle of discrimination, and of combination of like with like.

For this man, Pericles entertained an extraordinary esteem and admiration; and filling himself with this lofty and—as they call it—up-in-the-air sort of thought, derived hence not merely, as was natural, elevation of purpose and dignity of language, raised far above the base and dishonest buffooneries of mob eloquence, but besides this, a composure of countenance, and a serenity and calmness in all his movements, which no occurrence whilst he was speaking could disturb; with a sustained and even tone of voice, and various other advantages of a similar kind, which produced the greatest effect on his hearers. Once, after being reviled and ill-spoken of all day long in his own hearing by some vile and abandoned fellow in the open market-place, where he was engaged in the dispatch of some urgent affair, he continued his business in perfect silence, and in the evening returned home composedly, the man still dogging him at the heels, and pelting him all the way with abuse and foul language; and stepping into his house, it being by this time dark, he ordered one of his servants to take a light and go along with the man and see him safe home. Ion, it is true, the dramatic poet, says that Pericles's manner in company was somewhat over-assuming and pompous; and that into his high bearing there entered a good deal of slightingness and scorn of others; he reserves his commendation for Cimon's ease and pliancy and natural grace in society. Ion, however, who must needs make virtue, like a show of tragedies, include some comic scenes, we shall not altogether rely upon: Zeno used to bid those who called Pericles's gravity the affectation of a charlatan, to go and affect the like themselves; inasmuch as this mere counterfeiting might in time insensibly instill into them a real love and knowledge of those noble qualities.

Nor were these the only advantages which Pericles derived from Anaxagoras's acquaintance; he seems also to have become, by his instructions, superior to that superstition with which an ignorant wonder at appearances in the heavens, for example, possesses the minds of people unacquainted with their causes, eager for the supernatural, and excitable through an inexperience which the knowledge of natural causes removes, replacing wild and timid superstition by the good hope and assurance of an intelligent piety. . . .

Pericles, while yet but a young man, stood in considerable apprehension of the people, as he was thought in face and figure to be very like the tyrant Pisistratus; and those of great age remarked upon the sweetness of his voice, and his volubility and great rapidity in speaking, and were struck with amazement at the resemblance. Reflecting, too, that he had a considerable estate, and was descended of a noble family, and had friends of great influence, he was fearful all this might bring him to be banished as a dangerous person; and for this reason meddled not at all with State affairs, but in military service showed himself of a brave and intrepid nature. But when Aristides was now dead, and Themistocles driven out, and Cimon was for the most part kept abroad by the expeditions he made in parts out of Greece, Pericles seeing things in this posture, now advanced and took sides not with the rich and few, but with the many and poor; contrary to his natural bent, which was far from democratical,— but most likely fearing he might fall under suspicion of aiming at arbitrary power, and seeing Cimon on the side of the aristocracy, and much beloved by the better and more distinguished people, he joined the part of the people, with a view at once both to secure himself and procure means against Cimon.

He immediately entered also on quite a new course of life and management of his time. For he was never seen to walk in any street but that which led to the market-place and the council hall: and he avoided invitations of friends to supper, and all friendly visiting and intercourse whatever; in all the time he had to do with the public, which was not a little, he was never known to have gone to any of his friends to a supper, except that once when his near kinsman Euryptolemus married, he remained present till the ceremony of the drink-offering, and then immediately rose from the table and went his way. For these friendly meetings are very quick to defeat any assumed superiority, and in intimate familiarity an exterior of gravity is hard to maintain. . . .

A saying also of Thucydides the son of Melesias stands on record, spoken by him by way of pleasantry upon Pericles's dexterity. Thucydides was one of the noble and distinguished citizens, and had been his greatest opponent; and when Archidamus, the King of the Lacedæmonians, asked him whether he or Pericles were the better wrestler, he made this answer: «When I,» said he, «have thrown him and given him a fair fall, by persisting that he had no fall he gets the better of me, and makes the bystanders, in spite of their own eyes, believe him.» The truth however is, that Pericles himself was very careful what and how he was to speak; insomuch that whenever he went up to the hustings, he prayed the gods that no one word might unawares slip from him unsuitable to the matter and the occasion. . . .

That which gave most pleasure and ornament to the city of Athens, and the greatest admiration and even astonishment to all strangers, and that which now is Greece's only evidence that the power she boasts of and her ancient wealth are no romance or idle story, was his construction of the public and sacred buildings. Yet this was that of all his actions in the government which his enemies most looked askance upon, and caviled at in the popular assemblies: crying out how that the commonwealth of Athens had lost its reputation, and was ill spoken of abroad for removing the common treasure of the Greeks from the isle of Delos into their own custody; and how that their fairest excuse for so doing,—namely, that they took it away for fear the barbarians should seize it, and on purpose to secure it in a safe place,—this Pericles had made unavailable; and how that «Greece cannot but resent it as an insufferable affront, and consider herself to be tyrannized over openly, when she sees the treasure which was contributed by her upon a necessity for the war, wantonly lavished out by us upon our city, to gild her all over, and to adorn and set her forth, as it were some vain woman, hung round with precious stones and figures and temples which cost a world of money.»

Pericles, on the other hand, informed the people that they were in no way obliged to give any account of those moneys to their allies, so long as they maintained their defense, and kept off the barbarians from attacking them: while in the mean time they did not so much as supply one horse or man or ship, but only found money for the service; «which money,» said he, «is not theirs that give it, but theirs that receive it, if so be they perform the conditions upon which they receive it.» And that it was good reason that now the city was sufficiently provided and stored with all things necessary for the war, they should convert the overplus of its wealth to such undertakings as would hereafter, when completed, give them eternal honor, and for the present, while in process, freely supply all the inhabitants with plenty. With their variety of workmanship, and of occasions for service, which summon all arts and trades and require all hands to be employed about them, they do actually put the whole city, in a manner, into State pay; while at the same time she is both beautified and maintained by herself. For as those who are of age and strength for war are provided for and maintained in the armaments abroad by their pay out of the public stock, so, it being his desire and design that the undisciplined mechanic multitude that stayed at home should not go without their share of public salaries, and yet should not have them given them for sitting still and doing nothing, to the end he thought fit to bring in among them, with the approbation of the people, these vast projects of buildings and designs of works, that would be of some continuance before they were finished, and would give employment to numerous arts, so that the part of the people that stayed at home might, no less than those that were at sea or in garrisons or on expeditions, have a fair and just occasion of receiving the benefit and having their share of the public moneys.

The materials were stone, brass, ivory, gold, ebony, cypress-wood; and the arts or trades that wrought and fashioned them were smiths and carpenters, molders, founders and braziers, stone-cutters, dyers, goldsmiths, ivory-workers, painters, embroiderers, turners; those again that conveyed them to the town for use were merchants and mariners and shipmasters by sea, and by land, cartwrights, cattle-breeders, wagoners, rope-makers, flaxworkers, shoemakers and leather-dressers, road-makers, miners. And every trade in the same nature, as a captain in an army has his particular company of soldiers under him, had its own hired company of journeymen and laborers belonging to it, banded together as in array, to be as it were the instrument and body for the performance of the service. Thus, to say all in a word, the occasions and services of these public works distributed plenty through every age and condition.

As then grew the works up, no less stately in size than exquisite in form, the workmen striving to outvie the material and the design with the beauty of their workmanship, yet the most wonderful thing of all was the rapidity of their execution. Undertakings, any one of which singly might have required, they thought, for their completion, several successions and ages of men, were every one of them accomplished in the height and prime of one man's political service. Although they say too that Zeuxis once, having heard Agatharchus the painter boast of having dispatched his work with speed and ease, replied, «I take a long time.» For ease and speed in doing a thing do not give the work lasting solidity or exactness of beauty; the expenditure of time allowed to a man's pains beforehand for the production of a thing is repaid, by way of interest, with a vital force for its preservation when once produced. For which reason Pericles's works are especially admired, as having been made quickly yet to last long. For every particular piece of his work was immediately, even at that time, for its beauty and elegance, antique; and yet in its vigor and freshness looks to this day as if it were just executed. There is a sort of bloom of newness upon those works of his, preserving them from the touch of time, as if they had some perennial spirit and undying vitality mingled in the composition of them. . . .

The Lacedæmonians beginning to show themselves troubled at the growth of the Athenian power, Pericles, on the other hand, to elevate the people's spirit yet more, and to raise them to the thought of great actions, proposed a decree, to summon all the Greeks in what part soever, whether of Europe or Asia, every city, little as well as great, to send their deputies to Athens to a general assembly or convention, there to consult and advise concerning the Greek temples which the barbarians had burnt down, and the sacrifices which were due from them upon vows they had made to their gods for the safety of Greece when they fought against the barbarians; and also concerning the navigation of the sea, that they might henceforward all of them pass to and fro and trade securely, and be at peace among themselves. . . .

Nothing was effected, nor did the cities meet by their deputies, as was desired; the Lacedæmonians, as it is said, crossing the design underhand, and the attempt being disappointed and baffled first in Peloponnesus. I thought fit, however, to introduce the mention of it, to show the spirit of the man and the greatness of his thoughts. . . .

After this, having made a truce between the Athenians and Lacedæmonians for thirty years, he ordered by public decree the expedition against the isle of Samos, on the ground that when the Samians were bid to leave off their war with the Milesians, they had not complied. And as these measures against them are thought to have been taken to please Aspasia, this may be a fit point for inquiry about the woman: what art or faculty of charming she had that enabled her to captivate, as she did, the greatest of statesmen, and to give the philosophers occasion to speak so much about her, and that too not to her disparagement. That she was a Milesian by birth, the daughter of Axiochus, is a thing acknowledged. And they say it was in emulation of Thargelia, a courtesan of the old Ionian times, that she made her addresses to men of great power. Thargelia was a great beauty, extremely charming, and at the same time sagacious: she had numerous suitors among the Greeks, and brought all who had to do with her over to the Persian interest; and by their means, being men of the greatest power and station, sowed the seeds of the Median faction up and down in several cities. Some say that Aspasia was courted and caressed by Pericles on account of her knowledge and skill in politics. Socrates himself would sometimes go to visit her, and some of his acquaintance with him; and those who frequented her company would carry their wives with them to listen to her. Her occupation was anything but creditable, her house being a home for young courtesans. Æschines tells us also that Lysicles, a sheep-dealer, a man of low birth and character, by keeping Aspasia company after Pericles's death came to be chief man in Athens. And in Plato's 'Menexenus,' though we do not take the introduction as quite serious, still thus much seems to be historical: that she had the repute of being resorted to by many of the Athenians for instruction in the art of speaking. Pericles's inclination for her seems, however, to have rather proceeded from the passion of love. He had a wife that was near of kin to him, who had been married first to Hipponicus, by whom she had Callias, surnamed the Rich; and also she bore to Pericles, while she lived with him, two sons, Xanthippus and Paralus. Afterwards, when they did not well agree nor like to live together, he parted with her, with her own consent, to another man, and himself took Aspasia and loved her with wonderful affection: every day, both as he went out and as he came in from the market-place, he saluted and kissed her.

Phidias the sculptor had, as has before been said, undertaken to make the statute of Minerva. Now he, being admitted to friendship with Pericles, and a great favorite of his, had many enemies upon this account, who envied and maligned him; who also, to make trial in a case of his what kind of judges the commons would prove, should there be occasion to bring Pericles himself before them,—having tampered with Menon, one who had been a workman with Phidias, stationed him in the market-place, with a petition desiring public security upon his discovery and impeachment of Phidias. The people admitting the man to tell his story, and the prosecution proceeding in the assembly, there was nothing of theft or cheat proved against him; for Phidias from the very first beginning, by the advice of Pericles, had so wrought and wrapt the gold that was used in the work about the statue, that they might take it all off and make out the just weight of it, which Pericles at that time bade the accusers do. But the reputation of his works was what brought envy upon Phidias; especially, that where he represents the flight of the Amazons upon the goddess's shield, he had introduced a likeness of himself as a bald old man holding up a great stone with both hands, and had put in a very fine representation of Pericles fighting with an Amazon. And the position of the hand, which holds out the spear in front of the face, was ingeniously contrived to conceal in some degree the likeness, which meantime showed itself on either side.

Phidias then was carried away to prison, and there died of a disease; but as some say, of poison administered by the enemies of Pericles, to raise a slander, or a suspicion at least, as though he had procured it. The informer Menon, upon Glycon's proposal, the people made free from payment of taxes and customs, and ordered the generals to take care that nobody should do him any hurt. About the same time, Aspasia was indicted of impiety, upon the complaint of Hermippus the comedian; who also laid further to her charge that she received into her house freeborn women for the uses of Pericles. And Diophites proposed a decree, that public accusations should be laid against persons who neglected religion, or taught new doctrines about things above; directing suspicion, by means of Anaxagoras, against Pericles himself. The people receiving and admitting these accusations and complaints, at length by this means they came to enact a decree, at the motion of Dracontides, that Pericles should bring in the accounts of the moneys he had expended, and lodge them with the Prytanes; and that the judges, carrying their suffrage from the altar in the Acropolis, should examine and determine the business in the city. This last clause Hagnon took out of the decree, and moved that the causes should be tried before fifteen hundred jurors, whether they should be styled prosecutions for robbery, or bribery, or any kind of malversation. Pericles begged off Aspasia; shedding, as Æschines says, many tears at the trial, and personally entreating the jurors. But fearing how it might go with Anaxagoras, he sent him out of the city. And finding that in Phidias's case he had miscarried with the people, being afraid of impeachment, he kindled the war, which hitherto had lingered and smothered, and blew it up into a flame; hoping by that means to disperse and scatter these complaints and charges, and to allay their jealousy; the city usually throwing herself upon him alone, and trusting to his sole conduct, upon the urgency of great affairs and public dangers, by reason of his authority and the sway he bore.

Pericles, however, was not at all moved by any attacks, but took all patiently, and submitted in silence to the disgrace they threw upon him and the ill-will they bore him; and sending out a fleet of a hundred galleys to Peloponnesus, he did not go along with it in person, but stayed behind, that he might watch at home and keep the city under his own control, till the Peloponnesians broke up their camp and were gone. Yet to soothe the common people, jaded and distressed with the war, he relieved them with distributions of public moneys, and ordained new divisions of subject land. For having turned out all the people of Ægina, he parted the island among the Athenians according to lot. Some comfort, also, and ease in their miseries, they might receive from what their enemies endured. For the fleet, sailing round the Peloponnesus, ravaged a great deal of the country, and pillaged and plundered the towns and smaller cities; and by land he himself entered with an army the Megarian country, and made havoc of it all. Whence it is clear that the Peloponnesians, though they did the Athenians much mischief by land, yet suffering as much themselves from them by sea, would not have protracted the war to such a length, but would quickly have given it over, as Pericles at first foretold they would, had not some divine power crossed human purposes.

In the first place, the pestilential disease or plague seized upon the city, and ate up all the flower and prime of their youth and strength. Upon occasion of which, the people, distempered and afflicted in their souls as well as in their bodies, were utterly enraged like madmen against Pericles; and like patients grown delirious, sought to lay violent hands on their physician, or as it were, their father. They had been possessed, by his enemies, with the belief that the occasion of the plague was the crowding of the country people together into the town, forced as they were now, in the heat of the summer weather, to dwell many of them together even as they could, in small tenements and stifling hovels, and to be tied to a lazy course of life within doors, whereas before they lived in a pure, open, and free air. The cause and author of all this, said they, is he who on account of the war has poured a multitude of people from the country in upon us within the walls, and uses all these many men that he has here upon no employ or service, but keeps them pent up like cattle, to be overrun with infection from one another, affording them neither shift of quarters nor any refreshment.

With the design to remedy these evils, and to do the enemy some inconvenience, Pericles got a hundred and fifty galleys ready, and having embarked many tried soldiers, both foot and horse, was about to sail out; giving great hope to his citizens, and no less alarm to his enemies, upon the sight of so great a force. And now the vessels having their complement of men, and Pericles being gone aboard his own galley, it happened that the sun was eclipsed, and it grew dark on a sudden, to the affright of all,—for this was looked upon as extremely ominous. Pericles, therefore, perceiving the steersman seized with fear and at a loss what to do, took his cloak and held it up before the man's face, and screening him with it so that he could not see, asked him whether he imagined there was any great hurt or the sign of any great hurt in this; and he answering No, "Why," said he, "and what does that differ from this, only that what has caused that darkness there is something greater than a cloak?" This is a story which philosophers tell their scholars.

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His domestic concerns were in an unhappy condition, many of his friends and acquaintance having died in the plague-time, and those of his family having long since been in disorder and in a kind of mutiny against him. . . .

Xanthippus died in the plague-time, of that sickness. At which time Pericles also lost his sister, and the greatest part of his relations and friends, and those who had been most useful and serviceable to him in managing the affairs of State. Yet he did not shrink or give in upon these occasions, nor betray or lower his high spirit and the greatness of his mind under all his misfortunes; he was not even so much as seen to weep or to mourn, or even attend the burial of any of his friends or relations, till at last he lost his only remaining legitimate son. Subdued by this blow, and yet striving still as far as he could to maintain his principle, and to preserve and keep up the greatness of his soul,— when he came, however, to perform the ceremony of putting a garland of flowers upon the head of the corpse, he was vanquished by his passion at the sight, so that he burst into exclamations, and shed copious tears, having never done any such thing in all his life before. . . .

The city having made trial of other generals for the conduct of war, and orators for business of State, when they found there was no one who was of weight enough for such a charge, or of authority sufficient to be trusted with so great a command, regretted the loss of him, and invited him again to address and advise them and to reassume the office of general. He, however, lay at home in dejection and mourning: but was persuaded by Alcibiades and others of his friends to come abroad and show himself to the people; who having, upon his appearance, made their acknowledgments, and apologized for their untowardly treatment of him, he undertook the public affairs once more; and being chosen general, requested that the statute concerning base-born children, which he himself had formerly caused to be made, might be suspended,— that so the name and race of his family might not, for absolute want of a lawful heir to succeed, be wholly lost and extinguished. The case of the statute was thus: Pericles, when long ago at the height of his power in the State, having then, as has been said, children lawfully begotten, proposed a law that those only should be reputed true citizens of Athens who were born of parents both Athenian. After this, the King of Egypt having sent to the people, as a present, forty thousand bushels of wheat, which were to be shared out among the citizens, a great many actions and suits about legitimacy occurred by virtue of that edict,—cases which till that time had either not been known or not been taken notice of; and several persons suffered by false accusations. There were little less than five thousand who were convicted and sold for slaves; those who, enduring the test, remained in the government and passed muster for true Athenians, were found upon the poll to be fourteen thousand and forty persons in number.

It looked strange that a law which had been carried so far against so many people, should be canceled again by the same man that made it; yet the present calamity and distress which Pericles labored under in his family broke through all objections, and prevailed with the Athenians to pity him, as one whose losses and misfortunes had sufficiently punished his former arrogance and haughtiness. His sufferings deserved, they thought, their pity and even indignation, and his request was such as became a man to ask and men to grant: they gave him permission to enroll his son in the register of his fraternity, giving him his own name. This son afterward, after having defeated the Peloponnesians at Arginusæ, was with his fellow-generals put to death by the people.

About the time when his son was enrolled, it should seem, the plague seized Pericles; not with sharp and violent fits, as it did others that had it, but with a dull and lingering distemper, attended with various changes and alterations, leisurely by little and little wasting the strength of his body and undermining the noble faculties of his soul. So that Theophrastus, in his 'Morals,'—when discussing whether men's characters change with their circumstances, and their moral habits, disturbed by the ailings of their bodies, start aside from the rules of virtue,—has left it on record that Pericles, when he was sick, showed one of his friends that came to visit him an amulet or charm that the women had hung about his neck, as much as to say that he was very sick indeed when he would admit of such a foolery as that was.

When he was now near his end, the best of the citizens and those of his friends who were left alive, sitting about him, were speaking of the greatness of his merit, and his power, and reckoning up his famous actions and the number of his victories; for there were no less than nine trophies, which as their chief commander and the conqueror of their enemies he had set up for the honor of the city. They talked thus together among themselves, as though he were unable to understand or mind what they said, but had now lost his consciousness. He had listened however all the while, and attended to all; and speaking out among them said that he wondered they should commend and take notice of things which were as much owing to fortune as to anything else, and had happened to many other commanders, and at the same time should not speak or make mention of that which was the most excellent and greatest thing of all: "For," said he, "no Athenian, through my means, ever wore mourning."

He was indeed a character deserving our high admiration: not only for his equable and mild temper,— which all along in the many affairs of his life, and the great animosities which he incurred, he constantly maintained,— but also for the high spirit and feeling which made him regard it the noblest of all his honors, that in the exercise of such immense power he never had gratified his envy or his passion, nor ever had treated any enemy as irreconcilably opposed to him. And to me it appears that this one thing gives that otherwise childish and arrogant title a fitting and becoming significance: so dispassionate a temper, a life so pure and unblemished in the height of power and place, might well be called Olympian, in accordance with our conception of the divine beings to whom, as the natural authors of all good and nothing evil, we ascribe the rule and government of the world. Not as the poets represent, who, while confounding us with their ignorant fancies, are themselves confuted by their own poems and fictions, and call the place indeed where they say the gods make their abode, a secure and quiet seat, free from all hazards and commotions, untroubled with winds or with clouds, and equally through all time illumined with a soft serenity and a pure light, as though such were a home most agreeable for a blessed and immortal nature; and yet in the mean while affirm that the gods themselves are full of trouble and enmity and anger and other passions, which noway become or belong to even men that have any understanding. But this will perhaps seem a subject fitter for some other consideration, and that ought to be treated of in some other place.

The course of public affairs after his death produced a quick and speedy sense of the loss of Pericles. Those who while he lived resented his great authority, as that which eclipsed themselves, presently after his quitting the stage, making trial of other orators and demagogues, readily acknowledged that there never had been in nature such a disposition as his was, more moderate and reasonable in the height of that state he took upon him, or more grave and impressive in the mildness which he used. And that invidious arbitrary power, to which formerly they gave the name of monarchy and tyranny, did then appear to have been the chief bulwark of public safety: so great a corruption and such a flood of mischief and vice followed, which he, by keeping weak and low, had withheld from notice, and had prevented from attaining incurable height through a licentious impunity.

CORIOLANUS

From the ‹Lives of Illustrious Men.› Reprinted with the approval of Little, Brown & Co., publishers

It may be observed in general, that when young men arrive early at fame and repute, if they are of a nature but slightly touched with emulation, this early attainment is apt to extinguish their thirst and satiate their small appetite: whereas the first distinctions of more solid and weighty characters do but stimulate and quicken them and take them away, like a wind, in the pursuit of honor; they look upon these marks and testimonies to their virtue not as a recompense received for what they have already done, but as a pledge given by themselves of what they will perform hereafter; ashamed now to forsake or underlive the credit they have won, or rather, not to exceed and obscure all that is gone before by the lustre of their following actions.

Marcius, having a spirit of this noble make, was ambitious always to surpass himself, and did nothing, how extraordinary soever, but he thought he was bound to outdo it at the next occasion; and ever desiring to give continual fresh instances of his prowess, he added one exploit to another, and heaped up trophies upon trophies, so as to make it a matter of contest also among his commanders,—the later still vying with the earlier, which should pay him the greatest honor and speak highest in his commendation. Of all the numerous wars and conflicts in those days, there was not one from which he returned without laurels and rewards. And whereas others made glory the end of their daring, the end of his glory was his mother's gladness; the delight she took to hear him praised and to see him crowned, and her weeping for joy in his embraces, rendered him, in his own thoughts, the most honored and most happy person in the world. . . .

The Romans were now at war with the Volscian nation, whose principal city was Corioli; when therefore Cominius the consul had invested this important place, the rest of the Volscians, fearing it would be taken, mustered up whatever force they could from all parts to relieve it, designing to give the Romans battle before the city, and so attack them on both sides. Cominius, to avoid this inconvenience, divided his army, marching himself with one body to encounter the Volscians on their approach from without, and leaving Titus Lartius, one of the bravest Romans of his time, to command the other and continue the siege. Those within Corioli, despising now the smallness of their number, made a sally upon them; and prevailed at first, and pursued the Romans into their trenches. Here it was that Marcius, flying out with a slender company, and cutting those in pieces that first engaged him, obliged the other assailants to slacken their speed; and then with loud cries called on the Romans to renew the battle. For he had—what Cato thought a great point in a soldier—not only strength of hand and stroke, but also a voice and look that of themselves were a terror to an enemy. Divers of his own party now rallying and making up to him, the enemy soon retreated: but Marcius, not content to see them draw off and retire, pressed hard upon the rear, and drove them, as they fled away in haste, to the very gates of their city; where, perceiving the Romans to fall back from their pursuit, beaten off by the multitude of darts poured in upon them from the walls, and that none of his followers had the hardiness to think of falling in pell-mell among the fugitives, and so entering a city full of enemies in arms, he nevertheless stood and urged them to the attempt, crying out that fortune had now set open Corioli, not so much to shelter the vanquished as to receive the conquerors. Seconded by a few that were willing to venture with him, he bore along through the crowd, made good his passage, and thrust himself into the gate through the midst of them, nobody at first daring to resist him. But when the citizens, on looking about, saw that a very small number had entered, they now took courage, and came up and attacked them. A combat ensued of the most extraordinary description, in which Marcius, by strength of hand and swiftness of foot and daring of soul overpowering every one that he assailed, succeeded in driving the enemy to seek refuge for the most part in the interior of the town, while the remainder submitted, and threw down their arms; thus affording Lartius abundant opportunity to bring in the rest of the Romans with ease and safety.

The day after, when Marcius with the rest of the army presented themselves at the consul's tent, Cominius rose, and having rendered all due acknowledgment to the gods for the success of that enterprise, turned next to Marcius, and first of all delivered the strongest encomium upon his rare exploits, which he had partly been an eye-witness of himself, in the late battle, and had partly learned from the testimony of Lartius. And then he required him to choose a tenth part of all the treasure and horses and captives that had fallen into their hands, before any division should be made to others; besides which, he made him the special present of a horse with trappings and ornaments, in honor of his actions. The whole army applauded; Marcius however stepped forth, and declaring his thankful acceptance of the horse, and his gratification of the praises of his general, said that all other things, which he could only regard rather as mercenary advantages than any significations of honor, he must waive, and should be content with the ordinary portion of such rewards. «I have only,» said he, «one special grace to beg; and this I hope you will not deny me. There was a certain hospitable friend of mine among the Volscians, a man of probity and virtue, who is become a prisoner, and from former wealth and freedom is now reduced to servitude. Among his many misfortunes let my intercession redeem him from the one of being sold as a common slave.» Such a refusal and such a request on the part of Marcius were followed with yet louder acclamations; and he had many more admirers of this generous superiority to avarice, than of the bravery he had shown in battle. The very persons who conceived some envy and despite to see him so specially honored, could not but acknowledge that one who could so nobly refuse reward was beyond others worthy to receive it; and were more charmed with that virtue which made him despise advantage, than with any of those former actions that had gained him his title to it. It is the higher accomplishment to use money well than to use arms; but not to desire it is more noble than to use it.

When the noise of approbation and applause ceased, Cominius resuming, said: "It is idle, fellow-soldiers, to force and obtrude those other gifts of ours on one who is unwilling to accept them: let us therefore give him one of such a kind that he cannot well reject it; let us pass a vote, I mean, that he shall hereafter be called Coriolanus, unless you think that his performance at Corioli has itself anticipated any such resolution." Hence therefore he had his third name of Coriolanus, making it all the plainer that Caius was a personal proper name, and the second or surname Marcius was one common to his house and family; the third being a subsequent addition, which used to be imposed either from some particular act or fortune, bodily characteristic, or good quality of the bearer. . . .

Not long afterward he stood for the consulship; and now the people began to relent and incline to favor him, being sensible what a shame it would be to repulse and affront a man of his birth and merit after he had done them so many signal services. It was usual for those who stood for offices among them to solicit and address themselves personally to the citizens, presenting themselves in the forum with the toga on alone, and no tunic under it; either to promote their supplications by the humility of their dress, or that such as had received wounds might more readily display those marks of their fortitude. Certainly it was not out of suspicion of bribery and corruption that they required all such petitioners for their favor to appear ungirt and open, without any close garment: as it was much later, and many ages after this, that buying and selling crept in at their elections, and money became an ingredient in the public suffrages; proceeding thence to attempt their tribunals, and even attack their camps, till, by hiring the valiant and enslaving iron to silver, it grew master of the State, and turned their commonwealth into a monarchy. For it was well and truly said that the first destroyer of the liberties of a people is he who first gives them bounties and largesses. At Rome the mischief seems to have stolen secretly in, and by little and little, not being at once discerned and taken notice of. It is not certainly known who the man was that there first either bribed the citizens or corrupted the courts; whereas in Athens, Anytus the son of Anthemion is said to have been the first that gave money to the judges, when on his trial, toward the latter end of the Peloponnesian war, for letting the fort of Pylos fall into the hands of the enemy,—in a period while the pure and golden race of men were still in possession of the Roman forum.

Marcius, therefore, as the fashion of candidates was, showing the scars and gashes that were still visible on his body, from the many conflicts in which he had signalized himself during a service of seventeen years together,—they were, so to say, put out of countenance at this display of merit, and told one another that they ought in common modesty to create him consul. But when the day of election was now come, and Marcius appeared in the forum with a pompous train of senators attending him, and the patricians all manifested greater concern and seemed to be exerting greater efforts than they had ever done before on the like occasion, the commons then fell off again from the kindness they had conceived for him, and in the place of their late benevolence, began to feel something of indignation and envy; passions assisted by the fear they entertained, that if a man of such aristocratic temper, and so influential among the patricians, should be invested with the power which that office would give him, he might employ it to deprive the people of all that liberty which was yet left them. In conclusion they rejected Marcius. Two other names were announced, to the great mortification of the senators, who felt as if the indignity reflected rather upon themselves than on Marcius. He for his part could not bear the affront with any patience. He had always indulged his temper, and had regarded the proud and contentious element of human nature as a sort of nobleness and magnanimity; reason and discipline had not imbued him with that solidity and equanimity which enters so largely into the virtues of the statesman. He had never learned how essential it is for any one who undertakes public business, and desires to deal with mankind, to avoid above all things that self-will, which, as Plato says, belongs to the family of solitude; and to pursue above all things that capacity so generally ridiculed, of submission to ill-treatment. Marcius, straightforward and direct, and possessed with the idea that to vanquish and overbear all opposition is the true part of bravery, and never imagining that it was the weakness and womanishness of his nature that broke out, so to say, in these ulcerations of anger, retired, full of fury and bitterness against the people. The young patricians too — all that were proudest and most conscious of their noble birth — had always been devoted to his interest; and adhering to him now, with a fidelity that did him no good, aggravated his resentment with the expression of their indignation and condolence. He had been their captain, and their willing instructor in the arts of war when out upon expeditions, and their model in that true emulation and love of excellence which makes men extol, without envy or jealousy, each other's brave achievements. . . .

There was a man of Antium called Tullus Aufidius, who for his wealth and bravery and the splendor of his family had the respect and privilege of a king among the Volscians; but whom Marcius knew to have a particular hostility to himself, above all other Romans. Frequent menaces and challenges had passed in battle between them; and those exchanges of defiance to which their hot and eager emulation is apt to prompt young soldiers had added private animosity to their national feelings of opposition. Yet for all this, considering Tullus to have a certain generosity of temper, and knowing that no Volscian so much as he desired an occasion to requite upon the Romans the evils they had done, he did what much confirms the saying that —

> «Hard and unequal is with wrath the strife,
> Which makes us buy its pleasures with our life.»

Putting on such a dress as would make him appear to any whom he might meet most unlike what he really was, thus, like Ulysses, —

> «The town he entered of his mortal foes.»

His arrival at Antium was about evening, and though several met him in the streets, yet he passed along without being known to any, and went directly to the house of Tullus; and entering undiscovered, went up to the fire-hearth, and seated himself there without speaking a word, covering up his head. Those of the family could not but wonder, and yet they were afraid either to raise or question him, for there was a certain air of majesty both in his posture and silence; but they recounted to Tullus, being then at supper, the strangeness of this accident. He immediately rose from table and came in, and asked who he was, and for what business he came thither; and then Marcius, unmuffling himself and pausing awhile, «If,» said he, «you cannot call me to mind, Tullus, or do not believe your eyes concerning me, I must of necessity be my own accuser. I am Caius Marcius, the author of so much mischief to the Volscians; of which, were I seeking to deny it, the surname of Coriolanus I now bear would be a sufficient evidence against me. The one recompense I received for all the hardships and perils I have gone through was the title that proclaims my enmity to your nation, and this is the only thing which is still left me. Of all other advantages I have been stripped and deprived by the envy and outrage of the Roman people, and the cowardice and treachery of the magistrates and those of my own order. I am driven out as an exile, and become a humble suppliant at your hearth, not so much for safety and protection (should I have come hither, had I been afraid to die?) as to seek vengeance against those that expelled me; which methinks I have already obtained by putting myself into your hands. If therefore you have really a mind to attack your enemies, come then, make use of that affliction which you see me in to assist the enterprise, and convert my personal infelicity into a common blessing to the Volscians; as indeed I am likely to be more serviceable in fighting for than against you, with the advantage which I now possess of knowing all the secrets of the enemy that I am attacking. But if you decline to make any further attempts, I am neither desirous to live myself, nor will it be well in you to preserve a person who has been your rival and adversary of old, and now, when he offers you his service, appears unprofitable and useless to you.»

Tullus on hearing this was extremely rejoiced, and giving him his right hand, exclaimed, «Rise, Marcius, and be of good courage: it is a great happiness you bring to Antium, in the present you make us of yourself; expect everything that is good from the Volscians.» He then proceeded to feast and entertain him with every display of kindness; and for several days after, they were in close deliberation together on the prospects of a war. . . .

Tullus called a general assembly of the Volscians; and the vote passing for a war, he then proposed that they should call in Marcius, laying aside the remembrance of former grudges, and assuring themselves that the services they should now receive from him as a friend and associate would abundantly outweigh any harm or damage he had done them when he was their enemy. Marcius was accordingly summoned; and having made his entrance, and spoken to the people, won their good opinion of his capacity, his skill, counsel, and boldness, not less by his present words than by his past actions. They joined him in commission with Tullus, to have full power as general of their forces in all that related to the war. And he, fearing lest the time that would be requisite to bring all the Volscians together in full preparation might be so long as to lose him the opportunity of action, left order with the chief persons and magistrates of the city to provide other things; while he himself, prevailing upon the most forward to assemble and march out with him as volunteers without staying to be enrolled, made a sudden inroad into the Roman confines, when nobody expected him, and possessed himself of so much booty that the Volscians found they had more than they could either carry away or use in the camp. The abundance of provision which he gained, and the waste and havoc of the country which he made, however, were of themselves and in his account the smallest results of that invasion: the great mischief he intended, and his special object in all, was to increase at Rome the suspicions entertained of the patricians, and to make them upon worse terms with the people. With this view, while spoiling all the fields and destroying the property of other men, he took special care to preserve their farms and land untouched, and would not allow his soldiers to ravage there, or seize upon anything which belonged to them.

But when the whole strength of the Volscians was brought together in the field, with great expedition and alacrity, it appeared so considerable a body that they agreed to leave part in garrison, for the security of their towns, and with the other part to march against the Romans.

All at Rome was in great disorder; they were utterly averse from fighting, and spent their whole time in cabals and disputes and reproaches against each other: until news was brought that the enemy had laid close siege to Lavinium, where were the images and sacred things of their tutelar gods, and from whence they derived the origin of their nation; that being the first city which Æneas built in Italy. These tidings produced a change as universal as it was extraordinary in the thoughts and inclinations of the people. . . .

It was therefore unanimously agreed by all parties that ambassadors should be dispatched, offering Coriolanus return to his country, and desiring he would free them from the terrors and distresses of the war. The persons sent by the Senate with this message were chosen out of his kindred and acquaintance, who naturally expected a very kind reception at their first interview, upon the score of that relation and their old familiarity and friendship with him; in which, however, they were much mistaken. Being led through the enemy's camp, they found him sitting in state amidst the chief men of the Volscians, looking insupportably proud and arrogant. He bade them declare the cause of their coming, which they did in the most gentle and tender terms, and with a behavior suitable to their language. When they had made an end of speaking, he returned them a sharp answer, full of bitterness and angry resentment, as to what concerned himself and the ill usage he had received from them: but as general of the Volscians, he demanded restitution of the cities and the lands which had been seized upon during the late war, and that the same rights and franchises should be granted them at Rome which had been before accorded to the Latins; since there could be no assurance that a peace would be firm and lasting without fair and just conditions on both sides. He allowed them thirty days to consider and resolve. . . .

But when the thirty days were expired, and Marcius appeared again with his whole army, they sent another embassy to beseech him that he would moderate his displeasure, and would withdraw the Volscian army, and then make any proposals he thought best for both parties: the Romans would make no concessions to menaces, but if it were his opinion that the Volscians ought to have any favor shown them, upon laying down their arms they might obtain all they could in reason desire.

The reply of Marcius was, that he should make no answer to this as general of the Volscians: but in the quality still of a Roman citizen, he would advise and exhort them as the case stood, not to carry it so high, but think rather of just compliance, and return to him before three days were at an end, with a ratification of his previous demands; otherwise they must understand that they could not have any further freedom of passing through his camp upon idle errands.

When the ambassadors were come back, and had acquainted the Senate with the answer, seeing the whole State now threatened as it were by a tempest, and the waves ready to overwhelm them, they were forced, as we say in extreme perils, to let down the sacred anchor. A decree was made that the whole order of their priests — those who initiated in the mysteries or had the custody of them, and those who, according to the ancient practice of the country, divined from birds — should all and every one of them go in full procession to Marcius with their pontifical array, and the dress and habit which they respectively used in their several functions, and should urge him as before to withdraw his forces, and then treat with his countrymen in favor of the Volscians. He consented so far, indeed, as to give the deputation an admittance into his camp, but granted nothing at all, nor so much as expressed himself more mildly; but without capitulating or receding, bade them once for all choose whether they would yield or fight, since the old terms were the only terms of peace. When this solemn application proved ineffectual, the priests too returning unsuccessful, they determined to sit still within the city and keep watch about their walls, intending only to repulse the enemy should he offer to attack them, and placing their hopes chiefly in time and in extraordinary accidents of fortune; as to themselves, they felt incapable of doing anything for their own deliverance; mere confusion and terror and ill-boding reports possessed the whole city, till at last a thing happened not unlike what we so often find represented — without, however, being generally accepted as true — in Homer. . . . In the perplexity I have described, the Roman women went, some to other temples, but the greater part, and the ladies of highest rank, to the altar of Jupiter Capitolinus. Among these suppliants was Valeria, sister to the great Poplicola, who did the Romans eminent service both in peace and war. Poplicola himself was now deceased, as is told in the history of his life; but Valeria lived still, and enjoyed great respect and honor at Rome, her life and conduct noway disparaging her birth. She, suddenly seized with the sort of instinct or emotion of mind which I have described, and happily lighting, not without divine guidance, on the right expedient, both rose herself and bade the others rise, and went directly with them to the house of Volumnia, the mother of Marcius. And coming in and finding her sitting with her daughter-in-law, and with her little grandchildren on her lap, — Valeria, surrounded by her female companions, spoke in the name of them all: —

« We that now make our appearance, O Volumnia, and you, Vergilia, are come as mere women to women, not by direction of the Senate, or an order from the consuls, or the appointment of any other magistrate; but the divine being himself, as I conceive, moved to compassion by our prayers, prompted us to visit you in a body, and request a thing on which our own and the common safety depends, and which, if you consent to it, will raise your glory above that of the daughters of the Sabines, who won over their fathers and their husbands from mortal enmity to peace and friendship. Arise and come with us to Marcius; join in our supplication, and bear for your country this true and just testimony on her behalf: that notwithstanding the many mischiefs that have been done her, yet she has never outraged you, nor so much as thought of treating you ill, in all her resentment, but does now restore you safe into his hands, though there be small likelihood she should obtain from him any equitable terms."

The words of Valeria were seconded by the acclamations of the other women, to which Volumnia made answer:—

"I and Vergilia, my countrywomen, have an equal share with you all in the common miseries; and we have the additional sorrow, which is wholly ours, that we have lost the merit and good fame of Marcius, and see his person confined, rather than protected, by the arms of the enemy. Yet I account this the greatest of all misfortunes, if indeed the affairs of Rome be sunk to so feeble a state as to have their last dependence upon us. For it is hardly imaginable he should have any consideration left for us, when he has no regard for the country which he was wont to prefer before his mother and wife and children. Make use, however, of our service; and lead us, if you please, to him: we are able, if nothing more, at least to spend our last breath in making suit to him for our country."

Having spoken thus, she took Vergilia by the hand, and the young children, and so accompanied them to the Volscian camp. So lamentable a sight much affected the enemies themselves, who viewed them in respectful silence. Marcius was then sitting in his place, with his chief officers about him, and seeing the party of women advance toward them, wondered what might be the matter; but perceiving at length that his mother was at the head of them, he would fain have hardened himself in his former inexorable temper: but overcome by his feelings, and confounded at what he saw, he did not endure they should approach him sitting in state, but came down hastily to meet them; saluting his mother first, and embracing her a long time, and then his wife and children; sparing neither tears nor caresses, but suffering himself to be borne away and carried headlong, as it were, by the impetuous violence of his passion.

When he had satisfied himself, and observed that his mother Volumnia was desirous to say something, the Volscian council being first called in, he heard her to the following effect:—"Our dress and our very persons, my son, might tell you, though we should say nothing ourselves, in how forlorn a condition we have lived at home since your banishment and absence from us; and now consider with yourself, whether we may not pass for the most unfortunate of all women, to have that sight, which should be the sweetest that we could see, converted through I know not what fatality, to one of all others the most formidable and dreadful,—Volumnia to behold her son, and Vergilia her husband, in arms against the walls of Rome. Even prayer itself, whence others gain comfort and relief in all manner of misfortunes, is that which most adds to our confusion and distress: since our best wishes are inconsistent with themselves, nor can we at the same time petition the gods for Rome's victory and your preservation; but what the worst of our enemies would imprecate as a curse is the very object of our vows. Your wife and children are under the sad necessity, that they must either be deprived of you or of their native soil. As for myself, I am resolved not to wait till war shall determine this alternative for me; but if I cannot prevail with you to prefer amity and concord to quarrel and hostility, and to be the benefactor to both parties rather than the destroyer of one of them, be assured of this from me, and reckon steadfastly upon it,—that you shall not be able to reach your country unless you trample first upon the corpse of her that brought you into life. For it will be ill in me to wait and loiter in the world till the day come when I shall see a child of mine either led in triumph by his own countrymen, or triumphing over them. Did I require you to save your country by ruining the Volscians, then, I confess, my son, the case would be hard for you to solve. It is base to bring destitution on our fellow-citizens; it is unjust to betray those who have placed their confidence in us. But as it is, we do but desire a deliverance equally expedient for them and us; only more glorious and honorable on the Volscian side, who as superior in arms, will be thought freely to bestow the two greatest of blessings, peace and friendship, even when they themselves receive the same. If we obtain these, the common thanks will be chiefly due to you as the principal cause; but if they be not granted, you alone must expect to bear the blame from both nations. The chance of all war is uncertain; yet thus much is certain in the present,—that you, by conquering Rome, will only get the reputation of having undone your country; but if the Volscians happen to be defeated under your conduct, then the world will say that to satisfy a revengeful humor, you brought misery on your friends and patrons.»

Marcius listened to his mother while she spoke, without answering her a word; and Volumnia, seeing him stand mute also for a long time after she had ceased, resumed:—«O my son,» said she, «what is the meaning of this silence? Is it a duty to postpone everything to a sense of injuries, and wrong to gratify a mother in a request like this? Is it the characteristic of a great man to remember wrongs that have been done him, and not the part of a great and good man to remember benefits such as those that children receive from parents, and to requite them with honor and respect? You, methinks, who are so relentless in the punishment of the ungrateful, should not be more careless than others to be grateful yourself. You have punished your country already; you have not yet paid your debt to me. Nature and religion, surely, unattended by any constraint, should have won your consent to petitions so worthy and so just as these; but if it must be so, I will even use my last resource.» Having said this, she threw herself down at his feet, as did also his wife and children; upon which Marcius, crying out, «O mother! what is it you have done to me!» raised her up from the ground, and pressing her right hand with more than ordinary vehemence, «You have gained a victory,» said he, «fortunate enough for the Romans, but destructive to your son; whom you, though none else, have defeated.» After which, and a little private conference with his mother and his wife, he sent them back again to Rome, as they desired of him.

The next morning he broke up his camp, and led the Volscians homeward, variously affected with what he had done: some of them complaining of him and condemning his act; others, who were inclined to a peaceful conclusion, unfavorable to neither. A third party, while much disliking his proceedings, yet could not look upon Marcius as a treacherous person, but thought it pardonable in him to be thus shaken and driven to surrender at last under such compulsion. . . .

When Marcius came back to Antium, Tullus, who thoroughly hated and greatly feared him, proceeded at once to contrive how he might immediately dispatch him; as, if he escaped now, he was never likely to give him such another advantage. Having therefore got together and suborned several partisans against him, he required Marcius to resign his charge, and give the Volscians an account of his administration. . . .

Tullus began to dread the issue of the defense he was going to make for himself; for he was an admirable speaker, and the former services he had done the Volscians had procured and still preserved for him greater kindness than could be outweighed by any blame for his late conduct. Indeed, the very accusation itself was a proof and testimony of the greatness of his merits; since people could never have complained or thought themselves wronged because Rome was not brought into their power, but that by his means they had come so near to taking it. For these reasons the conspirators judged it prudent not to make any further delays, nor to test the general feeling; but the boldest of their faction, crying out that they ought not to listen to a traitor, nor allow him still to retain office and play the tyrant among them, fell upon Marcius in a body, and slew him there, none of those that were present offering to defend him. But it quickly appeared that the action was in no wise approved by the majority of the Volscians, who hurried out of their several cities to show respect to his corpse; to which they gave honorable interment, adorning his sepulchre with arms and trophies, as the monument of a noble hero and a famous general. When the Romans heard tidings of his death, they gave no other signification of either honor or of anger towards him, but simply granted the request of the women, that they might put themselves into mourning and bewail him for ten months, as the usage was upon the loss of a father or a son or a brother; that being the period fixed for the longest lamentation by the laws of Numa Pompilius, as is more amply told in the account of him.

Marcius was no sooner deceased but the Volscians felt the need of his assistance. They . . . were defeated by the Romans in a pitched battle, where not only Tullus lost his life, but the principal flower of their whole army was cut in pieces: so that they were forced to submit and accept of peace upon very dishonorable terms,—becoming subjects of Rome, and pledging themselves to submission.

PLUTARCH ON HIMSELF

From biography of Demosthenes, in the 'Lives of Illustrious Men.' Reprinted by permission of Little, Brown & Co., publishers.

Whoever it was, Sosius, that wrote the poem in honor of Alcibiades, upon his winning the chariot race at the Olympian Games,—whether it were Euripides, as is most commonly thought, or some other person,—he tells us that to a man's being happy, it is in the first place requisite he should be born in "some famous city." But for him that would attain to true happiness, which for the most part is placed in the qualities and disposition of the mind, it is in my opinion of no other disadvantage to be of a mean, obscure country, than to be born of a small or plain-looking woman. For it were ridiculous to think that Iulis, a little part of Ceos, which itself is no great island, and Ægina, which an Athenian once said ought to be removed, like a small eye-sore, from the port of Piræus, should breed good actors and poets,* and yet should never be able to produce a just, temperate, wise, and high-minded man. Other arts, whose end it is to acquire riches or honor, are likely enough to wither and decay in poor and undistinguished towns; but virtue, like a strong and durable plant, may take root and thrive in any place where it can lay hold of an ingenuous nature, and a mind that is industrious. I for my part shall desire that for any deficiency of mine in right judgment or action, I myself may be as in fairness held accountable, and shall not attribute it to the obscurity of my birthplace.

But if any man undertake to write a history that has to be collected from materials gathered by observation and the reading of works not easy to be got in all places, nor written always in his own language, but many of them foreign and dispersed in other hands,—for him, undoubtedly, it is in the first place and above all things most necessary to reside in some city of good note, addicted to liberal arts, and populous; where he may have plenty of all sorts of books, and upon inquiry may hear and inform himself of such particulars as, having escaped the pens of writers, are more faithfully preserved in the memories of men, lest his work be deficient in many things, even those which it can least dispense with.

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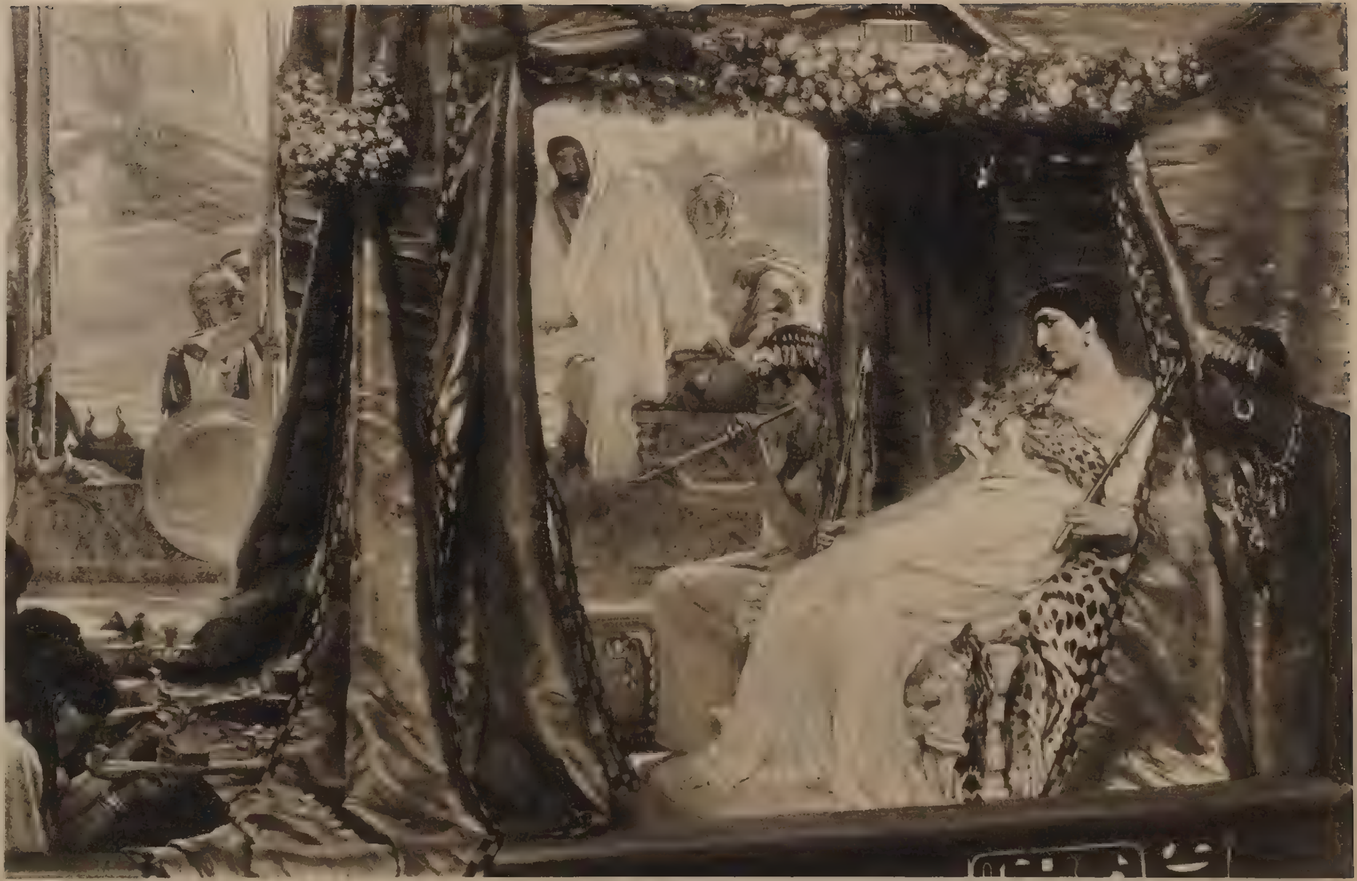
* Simonides, the lyric poet, was born at Iulis in Ceos; and Polus, the celebrated actor, was a native of Ægina.



But for me, I live in a little town, where I am willing to continue, lest it should grow less; and having had no leisure, while I was in Rome and other parts of Italy, to exercise myself in the Roman language, on account of public business and of those who came to be instructed by me in philosophy, it was very late, and in the decline of my age, before I applied myself to the reading of Latin authors. Upon which that which happened to me may seem strange, though it be true; for it was not so much by the knowledge of words that I came to the understanding of things, as by my experience of things I was enabled to follow the meaning of words. But to appreciate the graceful and ready pronunciation of the Roman tongue, to understand the various figures and connection of words, and such other ornaments in which the beauty of speaking consists, is, I doubt not, an admirable and delightful accomplishment; but it requires a degree of practice and study which is not easy, and will better suit those who have more leisure, and time enough yet before them for the occupation.

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

From the ‹Lives of Illustrious Men.› Reprinted with the approval of Little, Brown & Co., publishers.

With the better class and with all well-conducted people his [Antony's] general course of life made him, as Cicero says, absolutely odious; utter disgust being excited by his drinking bouts at all hours, his wild expenses, his gross amours, the day spent in sleeping or walking off his debauches, and the night in banquets and at theatres, and in celebrating the nuptials of some comedian or buffoon. . . .

But it was his character in calamities to be better than at any other time. Antony in misfortune was most nearly a virtuous man. It is common enough for people when they fall into great disasters to discern what is right, and what they ought to do: but there are few who in such extremities have the strength to obey their judgment, either in doing what it approves or avoiding what it condemns; and a good many are so weak as to give way to their habits all the more, and are incapable of using their minds. Antony on this occasion was a most wonderful example to his soldiers. He who had just quitted so much luxury and sumptuous living, made no difficulty now of drinking foul water and feeding on wild fruits and roots. Nay, it is related they ate the very bark of trees; and in passing over the Alps, lived upon creatures that no one before had ever been willing to touch. . . .

Whilst Cæsar in Rome was wearing out his strength amidst seditions and wars, Antony, with nothing to do amidst the enjoyments of peace, let his passions carry him easily back to the old course of life that was familiar to him. A set of harpers and pipers, Anaxenor and Xuthus, the dancing-man Metrodorus, and a whole Bacchic rout of the like Asiatic exhibitors, far outdoing in license and buffoonery the pests that had followed out of Italy, came in and possessed the court; the thing was past patience, wealth of all kinds being wasted on objects like these. The whole of Asia was like the city in Sophocles, loaded at one time

«—with incense in the air,
Jubilant songs, and outcries of despair.»

When he made his entry into Ephesus, the women met him dressed up like Bacchantes, and the men and boys like Satyrs and Fauns; and throughout the town nothing was to be seen but spears wreathed about with ivy, harps, flutes, and psalteries, while Antony in their songs was Bacchus the Giver of Joy and the Gentle. And so indeed he was to some, but to far more the Devourer and the Savage; for he would deprive persons of worth and quality of their fortunes to gratify villains and flatterers, who would sometimes beg the estates of men yet living, pretending they were dead, and, obtaining a grant, take possession. He gave his cook the house of a Magnesian citizen, as a reward for a single highly successful supper; and at last, when he was proceeding to lay a second whole tribute on Asia, Hybreas, speaking on behalf of the cities, took courage, and told him broadly, but aptly enough for Antony's taste, «If you can take two yearly tributes, you can doubtless give us a couple of summers, and a double harvest-time:» and put it to him in the plainest and boldest way, that Asia had raised two hundred thousand talents for his service; «If this has not been paid to you, ask your collectors for it; if it has, and is all gone, we are ruined men.» These words touched Antony to the quick, he being simply ignorant of most things that were done in his name: not that he was so indolent as he was prone to trust frankly in all about him. For there was much simplicity in his character: he was slow to see his faults, but when he did see them, was extremely repentant, and ready to ask pardon of those he had injured; prodigal in his acts of reparation, and severe in his punishments, but his generosity was much more extravagant than his severity; his raillery was sharp and insulting, but the edge of it was taken off by his readiness to submit to any kind of repartee; for he was as well contented to be rallied, as he was pleased to rally others. And this freedom of speech was indeed the cause of many of his disasters. He never imagined that those who used so much liberty in their mirth would flatter or deceive him in business of consequence; not knowing how common it is with parasites to mix their flattery with boldness, as confectioners do their sweetmeats with something biting, to prevent the sense of satiety. Their freedoms and impertinences at table were designed expressly to give to their obsequiousness in council the air of being not complaisance, but conviction.

Such being his temper, the last and crowning mischief that could befall him came in the love of Cleopatra, to awaken and kindle to fury passions that as yet lay still and dormant in his nature, and to stifle and finally corrupt any elements that yet made resistance in him, of goodness and a sound judgment. . . .

She was to meet Antony in the time of life when women's beauty is most splendid, and their intellects are in full maturity. She made great preparations for her journey, of money, gifts, and ornaments of value, such as so wealthy a kingdom might afford; but she brought with her her surest hopes in her own magic arts and charms.

She received several letters, both from Antony and from his friends, to summon her, but she took no account of these orders; and at last, as if in mockery of them, she came sailing up the river Cydnus, in a barge with gilded stern and outspread sails of purple, while oars of silver beat time to the music of flutes and fifes and harps. She herself lay all along, under a canopy of cloth of gold, dressed as Venus in a picture; and beautiful young boys, like painted Cupids, stood on each side to fan her. Her maids were dressed like Sea Nymphs and Graces, some steering at the rudder, some working at the ropes. The perfumes diffused themselves from the vessel to the shore, which was covered with multitudes, part following the galley up the river on either bank, part running out of the city to see the sight. The market-place was quite emptied, and Antony at last was left alone sitting upon the tribunal; while the word went through all the multitude that Venus was come to feast with Bacchus, for the common good of Asia. On her arrival, Antony sent to invite her to supper. She thought it fitter he should come to her; so, willing to show his good-humor and courtesy, he complied, and went. He found the preparations to receive him magnificent beyond expression, but nothing so admirable as the great number of lights; for on a sudden there was let down altogether so great a number of branches with lights in them so ingeniously disposed, some in squares and some in circles, that the whole thing was a spectacle that has seldom been equaled for beauty.

The next day Antony invited her to supper, and was very desirous to outdo her as well in magnificence as contrivance; but he found he was altogether beaten in both, and was so well convinced of it, that he was himself the first to jest and mock at his poverty of wit and his rustic awkwardness. She, perceiving that his raillery was broad and gross, and savored more of the soldier than the courtier, rejoined in the same taste, and fell into it at once, without any sort of reluctance or reserve. For her actual beauty, it is said, was not in itself so remarkable that none could be compared with her, or that no one could see her without being struck by it: but the contact of her presence, if you lived with her, was irresistible; the attraction of her person, joining with the charm of her conversation and the character that attended all she said or did, was something bewitching. It was a pleasure merely to hear the sound of her voice, with which, like an instrument of many strings, she could pass from one language to another: so that there were few of the barbarian nations that she answered by an interpreter; to most of them she spoke herself, as to the Æthiopians, Troglodytes, Hebrews, Arabians, Syrians, Medes, Parthians, and many others, whose language she had learnt: which was all the more surprising, because most of the kings her predecessors scarcely gave themselves the trouble to acquire the Egyptian tongue, and several of them quite abandoned the Macedonian.

Antony was so captivated by her, that while Fulvia his wife maintained his quarrels in Rome against Cæsar by actual force of arms, and the Parthian troops commanded by Labienus (the king's generals having made him commander-in-chief) were assembled in Mesopotamia and ready to enter Syria, he could yet suffer himself to be carried away by her to Alexandria, there to keep holiday like a boy in play and diversion, squandering and fooling away in enjoyments what Antiphon calls that most costly of all valuables, time. They had a sort of company, to which they gave a particular name, calling it that of the Inimitable Livers. The members entertained one another daily in turn, with an extravagance of expenditure beyond measure or belief. Philotas, a physician of Amphissa, who was at that time a student of medicine in Alexandria, used to tell my grandfather Lamprias that having some acquaintance with one of the royal cooks, he was invited by him, being a young man, to come and see the sumptuous preparations for supper. So he was taken into the kitchen, where he admired the prodigious variety of all things; but particularly, seeing eight wild boars roasting whole, says he, "Surely you have a great number of guests." The cook laughed at his simplicity, and told him there were not above twelve to sup, but that every dish was to be served up just roasted to a turn; and if anything was but one minute ill-timed, it was spoiled. "And," said he, "maybe Antony will sup just now, maybe not this hour; maybe he will call for wine, or begin to talk, and will put it off. So that," he continued, "it is not one, but many suppers must be had in readiness, as it is impossible to guess at his hour." . . .

[After the desertion of Antony's fleet and cavalry to Octavianus, and the defeat of his infantry, in the contest before Alexdria,] he retired into the city, crying out that Cleopatra had betrayed him to the enemies he had made for her sake. She, being afraid lest in his fury and despair he might do her a mischief, fled to her monument, and letting down the falling doors, which were strong with bars and bolts, she sent messengers who should tell Antony she was dead. He believing it cried out, "Now, Antony, why delay longer? Fate has snatched away the only pretext for which you could say you desired yet to live." Going into his chamber, and there loosening and opening his coat of armor, "I am not troubled, Cleopatra," said he, "to be at present bereaved of you, for I shall soon be with you; but it distresses me that so great a general should be found of a tardier courage than a woman." He had a faithful servant, whose name was Eros; he had engaged him formerly to kill him when he should think it necessary, and now he put him to his promise. Eros drew his sword, as designing to kill him, but suddenly turning round, he slew himself. And as he fell dead at his feet, «It is well done, Eros,» said Antony, «you show your master how to do what you had not the heart to do yourself:» and so he ran himself in the belly, and laid himself upon the couch. The wound, however, was not immediately mortal; and the flow of blood ceasing when he lay down, presently he came to himself, and entreated those that were about him to put him out of his pain; but they all fled out of the chamber, and left him crying out and struggling, until Diomede, Cleopatra's secretary, came to him, having orders from her to bring him into the monument

When he understood she was alive, he eagerly gave order to the servants to take him up, and in their arms was carried to the door of the building. Cleopatra would not open the door, but looking from a sort of window, she let down ropes and cords, to which Antony was fastened; and she and her two women, the only persons she had allowed to enter the monument, drew him up. Those who were present say that nothing was ever more sad than this spectacle,— to see Antony, covered all over with blood and just expiring, thus drawn up, still holding up his hands to her, and lifting up his body with the little force he had left. As indeed it was no easy task for the women; and Cleopatra, with all her force, clinging to the rope and straining with her head to the ground, with difficulty pulled him up, while those below encouraged her with their cries, and joined in all her effort and anxiety. When she had got him up, she laid him on the bed, tearing all her clothes, which she spread upon him; and beating her breasts with her hands, lacerating herself, and disfiguring her own face with the blood from his wounds, she called him her lord, her husband, her emperor, and seemed to have pretty nearly forgotten all her own evils, she was so intent upon his misfortunes. Antony, stopping her lamentations as well as he could, called for wine to drink; either that he was thirsty, or that he imagined that it might put him the sooner out of pain. When he had drunk, he advised her to bring her own affairs, so far as might be honorably done, to a safe conclusion, and that among all the friends of Cæsar, she should rely on Proculeius; that she should not pity him in this last turn of fate, but rather rejoice for him in remembrance of his past happiness, who had been of all men the most illustrious and powerful, and in the end had fallen not ignobly, a Roman by a Roman overcome. . . .

There was a young man of distinction among Cæsar's companions, named Cornelius Dolabella. He was not without a certain tenderness for Cleopatra; and sent her word privately, as she had besought him to do, that Cæsar was about to return through Syria, and that she and her children were to be sent on within three days. When she understood this, she made her request to Cæsar that he would be pleased to permit her to make oblations to the departed Antony; which being granted, she ordered herself to be carried to the place where he was buried, and there, accompanied by her women, she embraced his tomb with tears in her eyes, and spoke in this manner: — "Dearest Antony," said she, "it is not long since that with these hands I buried you: then they were free; now I am a captive, and pay these last duties to you with a guard upon me, for fear that my just griefs and sorrows should impair my servile body, and make it less fit to appear in their triumph over you. No further offerings or libations expect from me; these are the last honors that Cleopatra can pay your memory, for she is to be hurried away far from you. Nothing could part us whilst we lived, but death seems to threaten to divide us. You, a Roman born, have found a grave in Egypt; I, an Egyptian, am to seek that favor, and none but that, in your country. But if the gods below, with whom you now are, either can or will do anything (since those above have betrayed us), suffer not your living wife to be abandoned; let me not be led in triumph to your shame, but hide me and bury me here with you: since amongst all my bitter misfortunes, nothing has afflicted me like this brief time I have lived away from you."

Having made these lamentations, crowning the tomb with garlands and kissing it, she gave orders to prepare her a bath, and coming out of the bath, she lay down and made a sumptuous meal. And a country fellow brought her a little basket, which the guards intercepting and asking what it was, the fellow put the leaves which lay uppermost aside, and showed them it was full of figs; and on their admiring the largeness and beauty of the figs, he laughed, and invited them to take some, which they refused, and suspecting nothing, bade him carry them in. After her repast, Cleopatra sent to Cæsar a letter which she had written and sealed; and putting everybody out of the monument but her two women, she shut the doors. Cæsar, opening her letter, and finding pathetic prayers and entreaties that she might be buried in the same tomb with Antony, soon guessed what was doing. At first he was going himself in all haste, but changing his mind, he sent others to see. The thing had been quickly done. The messengers came at full speed, and found the guards apprehensive of nothing; but on opening the doors, they saw her stone-dead, lying upon a bed of gold, set out in all her royal ornaments. Iras, one of her women, lay dying at her feet; and Charmion, just ready to fall, scarce able to hold up her head, was adjusting her mistress's diadem. And when one that came in said angrily, "Was this well done of your lady, Charmion?" "Extremely well," she answered, "and as became the descendant of so many kings;" and as she said this, she fell down dead by the bedside.

Some relate that an asp was brought in amongst those figs and covered with the leaves, and that Cleopatra had arranged that it might settle on her before she knew; but when she took away some of the figs and saw it, she said, "So here it is," and held out her bare arm to be bitten. Others say that it was kept in a vase, and that she vexed and pricked it with a golden spindle till it seized her arm. But what really took place is known to no one. For it was also said that she carried poison in a hollow bodkin, about which she wound her hair; yet there was not so much as a spot found, or any symptom of poison upon her body, nor was the asp seen within the monument; only something like the trail of it was said to have been noticed on the sand by the sea, on the part towards which the building faced and where the windows were. Some relate that two faint puncture-marks were found on Cleopatra's arm, and to this account Cæsar seems to have given credit; for in his triumph there was carried a figure of Cleopatra, with an asp clinging to her. Such are the various accounts. But Cæsar, though much disappointed by her death, yet could not but admire the greatness of her spirit, and gave order that her body should be buried by Antony with royal splendor and magnificence. Her women, also, received honorable burial by his directions. Cleopatra had lived nine-and-thirty years, during twenty-two of which she had reigned as queen, and for fourteen had been Antony's partner in his empire. Antony, according to some authorities, was fifty-three, according to others fifty-six years old. His statues were all thrown down, but those of Cleopatra were left untouched, for Archibius, one of her friends, gave Cæsar two thousand talents to save them from the fate of Antony's.

LETTER TO HIS WIFE ON THEIR DAUGHTER'S DEATH

From Plutarch's ‹Miscellanies and Essays›: Copyrighted. Reprinted by permission of Little, Brown & Co., publishers

As for the messenger you dispatched to tell me of the death of my little daughter, it seems he missed his way as he was going to Athens. But when I came to Tanagra, I heard of it by my niece. I suppose by this time the funeral is over. I wish that whatever has been done may create you no dissatisfaction, as well now as hereafter. But if you have designedly let anything alone, depending upon my judgment, thinking better to determine the point if I were with you, I pray let it be without ceremony and timorous superstition, which I know are far from you.

Only, dear wife, let you and me bear our affliction with patience. I know very well and do comprehend what loss we have had; but if I should find you grieve beyond measure, this would trouble me more than the thing itself. For I had my birth neither from a stock nor a stone; and you know it full well, I having been assistant to you in the education of so many children, which we brought up at home under our own care. This daughter was born after four sons, when you were longing to bear a daughter; which made me call her by your own name. Therefore I know she was particularly dear to you. And grief must have a peculiar pungency in a mind tenderly affectionate to children, when you call to mind how naturally witty and innocent she was, void of anger, and not querulous. She was naturally mild, and compassionate to a miracle. And her gratitude and kindness not only gave us delight, but also manifested her generous nature; for she would pray her nurse to give suck, not only to other children, but to her very playthings, as it were courteously inviting them to her table, and making the best cheer for them she could.

Now, my dear wife, I see no reason why these and the like things, which delighted us so much when she was alive, should upon remembrance of them afflict us when she is dead. But I also fear lest, while we cease from sorrowing, we should forget her: as Clymene said—

«I hate the handy horned bow,
And banish youthful pastimes now,»—

because she would not be put in mind of her son by the exercises he had been used to. For nature always shuns such things as are troublesome. But since our little daughter afforded all our senses the sweetest and most charming pleasure, so ought we to cherish her memory, which will conduce in many ways — or rather manyfold — more to our joy than our grief. And it is but just that the same arguments which we have ofttimes used to others should prevail upon ourselves at this so seasonable a time, and that we should not supinely sit down and overwhelm the joys which we have tasted with a multiplicity of new griefs.

Moreover, they who were present at the funeral report this with admiration,— that you neither put on mourning, nor disfigured yourself or any of your maids; neither were there any costly preparations nor magnificent pomp; but all things were managed with silence and moderation in the presence of our relatives alone. And it seems not strange to me that you, who never used richly to dress yourself for the theatre or other public solemnities, esteeming such magnificence vain and useless even in matters of delight, have now practiced frugality on this sad occasion. For a virtuous woman ought not only to preserve her purity in riotous feasts, but also to think thus with herself: that the tempest of the mind in violent grief must be calmed by patience, which does not encroach on the natural love of parents towards their children, as many think, but only struggles against the disorderly and irregular passions of the mind. For we allow this love of children to discover itself in lamenting, wishing for, and longing after them when they are dead. But the excessive inclination to grief, which carries people on to unseemly exclamations and furious behavior, is no less culpable than luxurious intemperance. Yet reason seems to plead in its excuse; because, instead of pleasure, grief and sorrow are ingredients of the crime. What can be more irrational, I pray, than to check excessive laughter and joy, and yet to give a free course to rivers of tears and sighs, which flow from the same fountain? or as some do, quarrel with their wives for using artificial helps to beauty, and in the mean time suffer them to shave their heads, wear the mournful black, sit disconsolate, and lie in pain? and (which is worst of all) if their wives at any time chastise their servants or maids immoderately, to interpose and hinder them, but at the same time suffer them to torment and punish themselves most cruelly, in a case which peculiarly requires their greatest tenderness and humanity?

But between us, dear wife, there never was any occasion for such contests, nor I think will there ever be. For there is no philosopher of our acquaintance who is not in love with your frugality, both in apparel and diet; nor a citizen to whom the simplicity and plainness of your dress is not conspicuous, both at religious sacrifices and public shows in the theatre. Formerly also you discovered on the like occasion a great constancy of mind, when you lost your eldest son; and again when the lovely Chæron left us. For I remember, when the news was brought me of my son's death, as I was returning home with some friends and guests who accompanied me to my house, when they beheld all things in order and observed a profound silence everywhere,—as they afterwards declared to others,—they thought no such calamity had happened, but that the report was false. So discreetly had you settled the affairs of the house at that time, when no small confusion and disorder might have been expected. And yet you gave this son suck yourself, and endured the lancing of your breast, to prevent the ill effects of a contusion. These are things worthy of a generous woman, and one that loves her children.

Whereas we see most other women receive their children in their hands as playthings, with a feminine mirth and jollity; and afterwards, if they chance to die, they will drench themselves in the most vain and excessive sorrow. Not that this is any effect of their love, for that gentle passion acts regularly and discreetly; but it rather proceeds from a desire of vainglory, mixed with a little natural affection, which renders their mourning barbarous, brutish, and extravagant. Which thing Æsop knew very well, when he told the story of Jupiter's giving honors to the gods; for it seems Grief also made her demands, and it was granted that she should be honored, but only by those who were willing of their own accord to do it. And indeed, this is the beginning of sorrow. Everybody first gives her free access; and after she is once rooted and settled and become familiar, she will not be forced thence with their best endeavors. Therefore she must be resisted at her first approach: nor must we surrender the fort to her by any exterior signs, whether of apparel, or shaving the hair, or any other such-like symptoms of mournful weakness; which happening daily, and wounding us by degrees with a kind of foolish bashfulness, at length do so enervate the mind, and reduce her to such straits, that, quite dejected and besieged with grief, the poor timorous wretch dare not be merry, or see the light, or eat and drink in company. This inconvenience is accompanied by a neglect of the body: carelessness of anointing and bathing, with whatsoever relates to the elegancy of human life. Whereas on the contrary the soul, when it is disordered, ought to receive aid from the vigor of a healthful body. For the sharpest edge of the soul's grief is rebated and slacked when the body is in tranquillity and ease, like the sea in a calm. But where, from an ill course of diet, the body becomes dry and hot, so that it cannot supply the soul with commodious and serene spirits, but only breathes forth melancholy vapors and exhalations, which perpetually annoy her with grief and sadness, there it is difficult for a man (though never so willing and desirous) to recover the tranquillity of his mind, after it has been disturbed with so many evil affections.

But that which is most to be dreaded in this case does not at all affright me,—to wit, the visits of foolish women, and their accompanying you in your tears and lamentations; by which they sharpen your grief, not suffering it either of itself or by the help of others to fade and vanish away. For I am not ignorant how great a combat you lately entered, when you assisted the sister of Theon, and opposed the women who came running in with horrid cries and lamentations, bringing fuel as it were to her passion. Assuredly, when men see their neighbor's house on fire, every one contributes his utmost to quench it; but when they see the mind inflamed with furious passion, they bring fuel to nourish and increase the flame. When a man's eye is in pain, he is not suffered to touch it, though the inflammation provoke him to it; nor will they that are near him meddle with it. But he who is galled with grief sits and exposes his distemper to every one, like waters that all may poach in; and so that which at first seemed a light itching or trivial smart, by much fretting and provoking becomes a great and almost incurable disease. But I know very well that you will arm yourself against these inconveniences.

THE WIFE OF PYTHES

From the Discourse ‹Concerning the Virtues of Women› in Plutarch's ‹Miscellanies and Essays›: Copyrighted. Reprinted by permission of Little, Brown & Co., publishers.

IT IS reported that the wife of Pythes, who lived at the time of Xerxes, was a wise and courteous woman. Pythes, as it seems, finding by chance some gold mines, and falling vastly in love with the riches got out of them, was insatiably and beyond measure exercised about them: and he brought down likewise the citizens, all of whom alike he compelled to dig or carry or refine the gold, doing nothing else; many of them dying in the work, and all being quite worn out. Their wives laid down their petition at his gate, addressing themselves to the wife of Pythes. She bade them all depart and be of good cheer; but those goldsmiths which she confided most in she required to wait upon her, and confining them commanded them to make up golden loaves, all sorts of junkets and summer fruits, all sorts of fish and flesh meats, in which she knew Pythes was most delighted. All things being provided, Pythes coming home then (for he happened to go a long journey) and asking for his supper, his wife set a golden table before him, having no edible food upon it, but all golden. Pythes admired the workmanship for its imitation of nature. When however he had sufficiently fed his eyes, he called in earnest for something to eat; but his wife, when he asked for any sort, brought it of gold. Whereupon being provoked, he cried out, «I am an hungered.» She replied, «Thou hast made none other provisions for us: every skillful science and art being laid aside, no man works in husbandry; but neglecting sowing, planting, and tilling the ground, we delve and search for useless things, killing ourselves and our subjects.» These things moved Pythes, but not so as to give over all his works about the mine; for he now commanded a fifth part of the citizens to that work, the rest he converted to husbandry and manufactures. But when Xerxes made an expedition into Greece, Pythes, being most splendid in his entertainments and presents, requested a gracious favor of the King,—that since he had many sons, one might be spared from the camp to remain with him, to cherish his old age. At which Xerxes in a rage slew this son only which he desired, and cut him in two pieces, and commanded the army to march between the two parts of the corpse. The rest he took along with him, and all of them were slain in the wars. At which Pythes fell into a despairing condition, so that he fell under the like suffering with many wicked men and fools. He dreaded death, but was weary of his life; yea, he was willing not to live, but could not cast away his life. He had this project. There was a great mound of earth in the city, and a river running by it which they called Pythopolites. In that mound he prepared him a sepulchre, and diverted the stream so as to run just by the side of the mound, the river lightly washing the sepulchre. These things being finished, he enters into the sepulchre, committing the city and all the government thereof to his wife: commanding her not to come to him, but to send his supper daily laid on a sloop, till the sloop should pass by the sepulchre with the supper untouched; and then she should cease to send, as supposing him dead. He verily passed in this manner the rest of his life; but his wife took admirable care of the government, and brought in a reformation of all things amiss among the people.

THE TEACHING OF VIRTUE

From the Discourse ‹That Virtue may be Taught,› in Plutarch's ‹Miscellanies and Essays›: Copyrighted. Reprinted by permission of Little, Brown & Co., publishers.

MEN deliberate and dispute variously concerning virtue, whether prudence and justice and the right ordering of one's life can be taught. Moreover, we marvel that the works of orators, shipmasters, musicians, carpenters, and husbandmen are infinite in number, while good men are only a name, and are talked of like centaurs, giants, and the Cyclops: and that as for any virtuous action that is sincere and unblamable, and manners that are without any touch and mixture of bad passions and affections, they are not to be found; but if nature of its own accord should produce anything good and excellent, so many things of a foreign nature mix with it (just as wild and impure productions with generous fruit) that the good is scarce discernible. Men learn to sing, dance, and read, and to be skillful in husbandry and good horsemanship; they learn how to put on their shoes and their garments; they have those that teach them how to fill wine, and to dress and cook their meat; and none of these things can be done as they ought, unless they be instructed how to do them. And will ye say, O foolish men! that the skill of ordering one's life well (for the sake of which are all the rest) is not to be taught, but to come of its own accord, without reason and without art?

Why do we, by asserting that virtue is not to be taught, make it a thing that does not at all exist? For if by its being learned it is produced, he that hinders its being learned destroys it. And now, as Plato says, we never heard that because of a blunder in metre in a lyric song, therefore one brother made war against another, nor that it put friends at variance, nor that cities hereupon were at such enmity that they did to one another and suffered one from another the extremest injuries. Nor can any one tell us of a sedition raised in a city about the right accenting or pronouncing of a word,— as whether we are to say Τελχῖνας or Τέλχινας,— nor that a difference arose in a family betwixt man and wife about the woof and the warp in cloth. Yet none will go about to weave in a loom or to handle a book or a harp, unless he has first been taught, though no great harm would follow if he did, but only the fear of making himself ridiculous (for as Heraclitus says, it is a piece of discretion to conceal one's ignorance); and yet a man without instruction presumes himself able to order a family, a wife, or a commonwealth, and to govern very well. Diogenes, seeing a youth devouring his victuals too greedily, gave his tutor a box on the ear, and that deservedly, as judging it the fault of him that had not taught, not of him that had not learned, better manners. And what! is it necessary to begin from a boy to learn how to eat and drink handsomely in company,— as Aristophanes expresses it,

"Not to devour their meat in haste, nor giggle,
Nor awkwardly their feet across to wriggle,"—

and yet are men fit to enter into the fellowship of a family, city, married estate, private conversation, or public office, and to manage it without blame, without any previous instruction concerning good behavior in conversation?

When one asked Aristippus this question, What, are you everywhere? he laughed and said, I throw away the fare of the waterman if I am everywhere. And why canst not thou also answer, that the salary given to tutors is thrown away and lost if none are the better for their discipline and instruction? But as nurses shape and form the body of a child with their hands, so these masters, when the nurses have done with them, first receive them into their charge, in order to the forming of their manners and directing their steps into the first tracks of virtue.

THE NEED OF GOOD SCHOOLMASTERS

From ‹A Discourse on the Training of Children,› in Plutarch's ‹Miscellanies and Essays›: Copyrighted. Reprinted by permission of Little, Brown & Co., publishers.

We are to look after such masters for our children as are blameless in their lives, not justly reprovable for their manners, and of the best experience in teaching. For the very spring and root of honesty and virtue lies in the felicity of lighting on good education. And as husbandmen are wont to set forks to prop up feeble plants, so do honest schoolmasters prop up youth by careful instructions and admonitions, that they may duly bring forth the buds of good manners. But there are certain fathers nowadays who deserve that men should spit on them in contempt, who, before making any proof of those to whom they design to commit the teaching of their children, intrust them — either through unacquaintance, or as it sometimes falls out, through bad judgment — to men of no good reputation, or it may be such as are branded with infamy. They are not altogether so ridiculous, if they offend herein through bad judgment; but it is a thing most extremely absurd, when, as oftentimes it happens, though they know and are told beforehand by those who understand better than themselves, both of the incapacity and rascality of certain schoolmasters, they nevertheless commit the charge of their children to them, sometimes overcome by their fair and flattering speeches, and sometimes prevailed on to gratify friends who entreat them. This is an error of like nature with that of the sick man who to please his friends, forbears to send for the physician that might save his life by his skill, and employs a mountebank that quickly dispatcheth him out of the world; or of him who refuses a skillful shipmaster, and then at his friend's entreaty commits the care of his vessel to one that is therein much his inferior. In the name of Jupiter and all the gods, tell me how can that man deserve the name of a father, who is more concerned to gratify others in their requests than to have his children well educated? Or is not that rather fitly applicable to this case which Socrates, that ancient philosopher, was wont to say,—that if he could get up to the highest place in the city, he would lift up his voice and make this proclamation thence: "What mean you, fellow-citizens, that you thus turn every stone to scrape wealth together, and take so little care of your children, to whom one day you must relinquish it all?"—to which I would add this, that such parents do like him that is solicitous about his shoe, but neglects the foot that is to wear it. And yet many fathers there are, who care so much for their money and so little for their children, that lest it should cost them more than they are willing to spare to hire a good schoolmaster for them, they rather choose such persons to instruct their children as are of no worth; thereby beating down the market, that they may purchase ignorance cheap. It was therefore a witty and handsome jeer which Aristippus bestowed on a stupid father, who asked him what he would take to teach his child. He answered, a thousand drachms. Whereupon the other cried out: O Hercules, what a price you ask! for I can buy a slave at that rate. Do so, then, said the philosopher, and thou shalt have two slaves instead of one,—thy son for one, and him thou buyest for another.

MOTHERS AND NURSES

From ‹A Discourse on the Training of Children,› in Plutarch's ‹Miscellanies and Essays›: Copyrighted. Reprinted by permission of Little, Brown & Co., publishers.

The next thing that falls under our consideration is the nursing of children, which in my judgment the mothers should do themselves, giving their own breasts to those they have borne. For this office will certainly be performed with more tenderness and carefulness by natural mothers; who will love their children intimately, as the saying is, from their tender nails. Whereas both wet and dry nurses who are hired, love only for their pay, and are affected to their work as ordinarily those that are substituted and deputed in the place of others are. Yea, even Nature seems to have assigned the suckling and nursing of the issue to those that bear them; for which cause she hath bestowed upon every living creature that brings forth young, milk to nourish them withal. And in conformity thereto, Providence hath also wisely ordered that women should have two breasts, that so, if any of them should happen to bear twins, they might have two several springs of nourishment ready for them. Though if they had not that furniture, mothers would still be more kind and loving to their own children. And that not without reason; for constant feeding together is a great means to heighten the affection mutually betwixt any persons. Yea, even beasts, when they are separated from those that have grazed with them, do in their way show a longing for the absent. Wherefore, as I have said, mothers themselves should strive to the utmost to nurse their own children. But if they find it impossible to do it themselves, either because of bodily weakness (and such a case may fall out), or because they are apt to be quickly with child again, then are they to choose the honestest nurses they can get, and not to take whomsoever they have offered them. And the first thing to be looked after in this choice is, that the nurses be bred after the Greek fashion. For as it is needful that the members of children be shaped aright as soon as they are born, that they may not afterwards prove crooked and distorted, so it is no less expedient that their manners be well fashioned from the very beginning. For childhood is a tender thing, and easily wrought into any shape. Yea, and the very souls of children readily receive the impressions of those things that are dropped into them while they are yet but soft; but when they grow older they will, as all hard things are, be more difficult to be wrought upon And as soft wax is apt to take the stamp of the seal, so are the minds of children to receive the instructions imprinted on them at that age.

All the above citations from the ‹Morals› are from a translation edited by W. W. Goodwin

EDGAR ALLAN POE.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

(1809–1849)

BY FREDERIC W. H. MYERS

Edgar Allan Poe has on two grounds a saving claim to the inclusion of specimens of his work in an American collection of ‘The World's Best Literature.’ His first claim is historical; arising from his position among the earliest distinguished writers of the great American branch of English-speaking folk. «Securus judicat orbis terrarum»* may be said now by the Western as well as by the Eastern world; and a man whom the United States count among their intellectual ancestry could have no better vantage-ground for enduring fame.

Poe's second claim to representation in this world-famous group must rest mainly, I think, upon a narrow ground; namely, the strange beauty of a few lines of his verse. How strong that claim will be with true verse-lovers I must presently try to show. First, however, a few words must be said on his prose writings. Poe's historical position has been, perhaps inevitably, regarded as a reason for reprinting many volumes of his prose; but it is only on some few tales that his admirers will wish to linger. He wrote often actually for bread; often to gratify some mere personal feeling; sometimes (as in ‘Eureka’) with a kind of schoolboy exultation over imaginary discoveries, which adds a pang to our regret that so open and eager a spirit should have missed its proper training. With some of the tales of course the case is very different. A good many of them, indeed, are too crude, or too repulsive, or too rhetorical for our modern taste. But the best are veritable masterpieces; and have been, if not actually the prototypes, at least the most ingenious and effective models, of a whole *genre* of literature which has since sprung up in rich variety. Growing science has afforded a wider basis for these strange fantasies; and modern literary art has invested with fresh realism many a wild impossible story. But Poe's best tales show a certain intensity which perhaps no successor has reached; not only in his conception of the play of weird passions in weird environments, but in a still darker mood of mind which must keep its grim attractiveness so long as the mystery of the Universe shall press upon the lives of men.

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*«The world's judgment is beyond appeal.»

Fear was the primitive temper of the human race. It lies deep in us still; and in some minds of high development the restless dread, the shuddering superstition, of the savage have been sublimed into a new kind of cosmic terror. «Je ne vois qu'Infini par toutes les fenêtres,»* said Baudelaire; and the Infinite which he felt encompassing him was nothing else than hell. Poe, whom Baudelaire admired and translated, was a man born like Baudelaire to feel this terror; born to hear—

«Time flowing in the middle of the night,
And all things moving toward a day of doom»;

born to behold all sweet and sacred emotion curdling, as it were, on the temple floor into supernatural horror;

«—latices nigrescere sacros,
Fusaque in obscenum se vertere vina cruorem.»†

To transmit this thrill without undue repulsion needs more of art than either Poe or Baudelaire could often give. Poe had not Baudelaire's cruel and isolating lust, but he dwelt even more than Baudelaire upon the merely loathsome; upon aspects of physical decay. «Soft may the worms about her creep!» is his requiem over a maiden motionless in death: «this cheek where the worm never dies» is his metaphor for the mourner's sorrow. Such phrases do not justify the claim sometimes made for Poe of *goût exquis*, of infallible artistic instinct. Yet this cosmic terror in the background of his thought gives to some of his prose pages a constraining power; and in some rare verses it is so fused with beauty that it enters the heart with a poignancy that is delight as well as pain.

The charm of poetry can be created for us by but few men; but Poe in a few moments was one of these few. His poems, indeed, have been very variously judged; and their merit is of a *virtuoso* type which needs special defense from those who keenly feel it.

Few verse-writers, we must at once admit, have been more barren than Poe of any serious «message»; more unequal to any «criticism of life»; narrower in range of thought, experience, emotion. Few verse-writers whom we can count as poets have left so little verse, and of that little so large a proportion which is indefensibly bad. On some dozen short pieces alone can Poe's warmest admirers rest his poetic repute. And how terribly open to criticism some of even those pieces are! To analyze 'Ulalume,' for instance, would be like breaking a death's-head moth on the wheel. But nevertheless, a dozen solid British poets of the Southey type would to my mind be well bartered for those few lines of Poe's which after the sternest sifting must needs remain.

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*«I see only the Infinite through every window.»

†«To behold the sacral waters turning black, and the outpoured wine transformed into foul blood.»

To justify this preference I must appeal, as I have said, to a kind of *virtuoso* standard, which is only too apt to degenerate into mere pose and affectation. But in truth, besides and apart from — if you will, below — that nobler view of poets as prophets, message-bearers, voices of the race, there does exist a very real aspect of all verse-makers as a vast band of persons playing a game something like 'Patience' *in excelsis:* a game in which words are dealt round as counters, and you have to arrange your counters in such a pattern that rivals and spectators alike shall vote you a prize; one prize only being awarded for about ten thousand competitors in the game. Poe has won a prize with a few small patterns which no one in his generation could exactly beat.

«Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow; —
This — all this — was in the olden
Time long ago.»

These lines contain no particular idea; and the last two of them consist literally of a story-teller's formula as old as folk-lore. But who before Poe made this egg stand on its end? What inward impulse struck the strong note of *Banners*, and marshaled those long vowels in deepening choir, and interjected the intensifying pause — *all this*, and led on through air to the melancholy *olden*, and hung in the void of an unknown eternity the diapason of *Time long ago?* Or, to take a simple test, can you quote, say, from Byron one single stanza of like haunting quality; — can you quote *many* such stanzas from whomsoever you will?

Such verbal criticism as this should not, as I have said, be pushed too far. I will conclude with the most definite praise which I can find for Poe; and this same poem, 'The Haunted Palace,' suggests the theme.

The most appealing verses of many poets have been inspired by their own life's regret or despair. Burns is at his best in his 'Epitaph,' Cowper in his 'Castaway,' Shelley in his 'Stanzas Written in Dejection,' Keats in his 'Drear-Nighted December,' Mrs. Browning in 'The Great God Pan.' In 'The Haunted Palace' Poe allegorizes the same theme. We cannot claim for Poe the gravity of Cowper, nor the manliness of Burns, nor the refinement of Mrs. Browning, nor the ethereality of Shelley, nor the lovableness of Keats. Our sympathy, our sense of kinship, go forth to one of these other poets rather than to him. Yet to me at least none of these poems comes home so *poignantly* as Poe's; none quivers with such a sense of awful issues, of wild irreparable ill.

'Εκ μικρῶν ὀλίγιστα.* Little indeed of Poe's small poetic output can stand the test of time. Call him, if you will, the least of the immortals: but let us trust that immortal he shall be; that the ever-gathering wind which bears down to us odors of the Past shall carry always a trace of the bitter fragrance crushed out from this despairing soul.

F W H Myers.

[BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.—Both Poe's parents were actors, and he was born while the itinerant company was playing in Boston, January 19th, 1809. Within three years both parents died, and the boy was adopted by John Allan, a merchant of Richmond, Virginia. The family lived in England from 1815 to 1820. In 1827 young Poe, after a single brilliant but disastrous year at the University of Virginia, made a still prompter failure in Mr. Allan's counting-room, deserted his too indulgent foster-parents, printed a volume of verse in Boston,—and enlisted there as a private soldier! Rising from the ranks, he in 1830 secured a cadetship at West Point. «Riding for a fall,» he was dismissed for failure in his studies, March 1831.

From this time Poe led a roving and precarious life, as author and editor, in Baltimore, Richmond, and finally for the most part in New York. His intemperate habits embittered his personal quarrels and hastened his business failures. He married his cousin Virginia Clemm in 1835 or 1836. Her prolonged illness, and her death in January 1847, gave the *coup de grâce* to Poe's shattered constitution. He died forlorn in a Baltimore hospital, October 7th, 1849.

The best biography of Poe is that by Prof. George E. Woodberry in the ‹American Men of Letters› Series (Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston); and the authoritative and complete edition of his works is that in ten volumes, edited by Mr. E. C. Stedman and Prof. Woodberry, and published by Stone & Kimball, New York.]

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*Very little even of the little.

A DESCENT INTO THE MAELSTROM

We had now reached the summit of the loftiest crag. For some minutes the old man seemed too much exhausted to speak.

«Not long ago,» said he at length, «and I could have guided you on this route as well as the youngest of my sons; but about three years past there happened to me an event such as never happened before to mortal man,—or at least such as no man ever survived to tell of,—and the six hours of deadly terror which I then endured have broken me up body and soul. You suppose me a *very* old man, but I am not. It took less than a single day to change these hairs from a jetty black to white, to weaken my limbs, and to unstring my nerves so that I tremble at the least exertion and am frightened at a shadow. Do you know I can scarcely look over this little cliff without getting giddy?»

The «little cliff,» upon whose edge he had so carelessly thrown himself to rest that the weightier portion of his body hung over it, while he was only kept from falling by the tenure of his elbow on its extreme and slippery edge—this «little cliff» arose, a sheer unobstructed precipice of black shining rock, some fifteen or sixteen hundred feet from the world of crags beneath us. Nothing would have tempted me to within half a dozen yards of its brink. In truth, so deeply was I excited by the perilous position of my companion that I fell at full length upon the ground, clung to the shrubs around me, and dared not even glance upward at the sky—while I struggled in vain to divest myself of the idea that the very foundations of the mountain were in danger from the fury of the winds. It was long before I could reason myself into sufficient courage to sit up and look out into the distance.

«You must get over these fancies,» said the guide; «for I have brought you here that you might have the best possible view of the scene of that event I mentioned, and to tell you the whole story with the spot just under your eye.

«We are now,» he continued in that particularizing manner which distinguished him,—«we are now close upon the Norwegian coast—in the sixty-eighth degree of latitude—in the great province of Nordland—and in the dreary district of Lofoden. The mountain upon whose top we sit is Helseggen, the

Cloudy. Now raise yourself up a little higher—hold on to the grass if you feel giddy—so—and look out, beyond the belt of vapor beneath us, into the sea."

I looked dizzily, and beheld a wide expanse of ocean whose waters wore so inky a hue as to bring at once to my mind the Nubian geographer's account of the *Mare Tenebrarum.* A panorama more deplorably desolate no human imagination can conceive. To the right and left, as far as the eye could reach, there lay outstretched, like ramparts of the world, lines of horribly black and beetling cliff, whose character of gloom was but the more forcibly illustrated by the surf which reared high up against it its white and ghastly crest, howling and shrieking forever. Just opposite the promontory upon whose apex we were placed, and at a distance of some five or six miles out at sea, there was visible a small bleak-looking island; or more properly, its position was discernible through the wilderness of surge in which it was enveloped. About two miles nearer the land arose another of smaller size, hideously craggy and barren, and encompassed at various intervals by a cluster of dark rocks.

The appearance of the ocean in the space between the more distant island and the shore had something very unusual about it. Although at the time so strong a gale was blowing landward that a brig in the remote offing lay to under a double-reefed trysail, and constantly plunged her whole hull out of sight, still there was here nothing like a regular swell, but only a short, quick, angry cross-dashing of water in every direction—as well in the teeth of the wind as otherwise. Of foam there was little except in the immediate vicinity of the rocks.

"The island in the distance," resumed the old man, "is called by the Norwegians Vurrgh. The one midway is Moskoe. That a mile to the northward is Ambaaren. Yonder are Islesen, Hotholm, Keildhelm, Suarven, and Buckholm. Farther off—between Moskoe and Vurrgh—are Otterholm, Flimen, Sandflesen, and Stockholm. These are the true names of the places; but why it has been thought necessary to name them at all is more than either you or I can understand. Do you hear anything? Do you see any change in the water?"

We had now been about ten minutes upon the top of Helseggen,—to which we had ascended from the interior of Lofoden, so that we had caught no glimpse of the sea until it had burst upon us from the summit. As the old man spoke I became aware of a loud and gradually increasing sound, like the moaning of a vast herd of buffaloes upon an American prairie; and at the same moment I perceived that what seamen term the *chopping* character of the ocean beneath us was rapidly changing into a current which set to the eastward. Even while I gazed, this current acquired a monstrous velocity. Each moment added to its speed — to its headlong impetuosity. In five minutes the whole sea, as far as Vurrgh, was lashed into ungovernable fury, but it was between Moskoe and the coast that the main uproar held its sway. Here the vast bed of the waters, seamed and scarred into a thousand conflicting channels, burst suddenly into frenzied convulsion: heaving, boiling, hissing; gyrating in gigantic and innumerable vortices, and all whirling and plunging on to the eastward with a rapidity which water never elsewhere assumes, except in precipitous descents.

In a few minutes more there came over the scene another radical alteration. The general surface grew somewhat more smooth, and the whirlpools one by one disappeared, while prodigious streaks of foam became apparent where none had been seen before. These streaks, at length, spreading out to a great distance and entering into combination, took unto themselves the gyratory motion of the subsided vortices, and seemed to form the germ of another more vast. Suddenly — very suddenly — this assumed a distinct and definite existence, in a circle of more than a mile in diameter. The edge of the whirl was represented by a broad belt of gleaming spray; but no particle of this slipped into the mouth of the terrific funnel, whose interior, as far as the eye could fathom it, was a smooth, shining, and jet-black wall of water, inclined to the horizon at an angle of some forty-five degrees, speeding dizzily round and round with a swaying and sweltering motion, and sending forth to the winds an appalling voice, half shriek, half roar, such as not even the mighty cataract of Niagara ever lifts up in its agony to Heaven.

The mountain trembled to its very base, and the rock rocked. I threw myself upon my face, and clung to the scant herbage in an excess of nervous agitation.

«This,» said I at length to the old man,—«this *can* be nothing else than the great whirlpool of the Maelström.»

«So it is sometimes termed,» said he. «We Norwegians call it the Moskoe-ström, from the island of Moskoe in the midway.»

The ordinary accounts of this vortex had by no means prepared me for what I saw. That of Jonas Ramus, which is perhaps the most circumstantial of any, cannot impart the faintest conception either of the magnificence or of the horror of the scene, or of the wild bewildering sense of *the novel* which confounds the beholder. I am not sure from what point of view the writer in question surveyed it, nor at what time; but it could neither have been from the summit of Helseggen, nor during a storm. There are some passages of his description, nevertheless, which may be quoted for their details, although their effect is exceedingly feeble in conveying an impression of the spectacle.

« Between Lofoden and Moskoe,» he says, « the depth of the water is between thirty-six and forty fathoms; but on the other side, toward Ver [Vurrgh], this depth decreases so as not to afford a convenient passage for a vessel, without the risk of splitting on the rocks, which happens even in the calmest weather. When it is flood, the stream runs up the country between Lofoden and Moskoe with a boisterous rapidity; but the roar of its impetuous ebb to the sea is scarce equaled by the loudest and most dreadful cataracts,—the noise being heard several leagues off: and the vortices or pits are of such an extent and depth, that if a ship comes within its attraction, it is inevitably absorbed and carried down to the bottom, and there beat to pieces against the rocks; and when the water relaxes, the fragments thereof are thrown up again. But these intervals of tranquillity are only at the turn of the ebb and flood, and in calm weather, and last but a quarter of an hour, its violence gradually returning. When the stream is most boisterous, and its fury heightened by a storm, it is dangerous to come within a Norway mile of it. Boats, yachts, and ships have been carried away by not guarding against it before they were within its reach. It likewise happens frequently that whales come too near the stream and are overpowered by its violence; and then it is impossible to describe their howlings and bellowings in their fruitless struggles to disengage themselves. A bear once, attempting to swim from Lofoden to Moskoe, was caught by the stream and borne down, while he roared terribly, so as to be heard on shore. Large stocks of firs and pine-trees, after being absorbed by the current, rise again broken and torn to such a degree as if bristles grew upon them. This plainly shows the bottom to consist of craggy rocks, among which they are whirled to and fro. This stream is regulated by the flux and reflux of the sea,—it being constantly high and low water every six hours. In the year 1645, early in the morning of Sexagesima Sunday, it raged with such noise and impetuosity that the very stones of the houses on the coast fell to the ground."

In regard to the depth of the water, I could not see how this could have been ascertained at all in the immediate vicinity of the vortex. The "forty fathoms" must have reference only to portions of the channel close upon the shore either of Moskoe or Lofoden. The depth in the centre of the Moskoe-ström must be unmeasurably greater. . . . Looking down from this pinnacle upon the howling Phlegethon below, I could not help smiling at the simplicity with which the honest Jonas Ramus records, as a matter difficult of belief, the anecdotes of the whales and the bears; for it appeared to me a self-evident thing that the largest ships of the line in existence, coming within the influence of that deadly attraction, could resist it as little as a feather the hurricane, and must disappear bodily and at once.

The attempts to account for the phenomenon—some of which, I remember, seemed to me sufficiently plausible in perusal—now wore a very different and unsatisfactory aspect. The idea generally received is that this, as well as three smaller vortices among the Ferroe Islands, "have no other cause than the collision of waves rising and falling, at flux and reflux, against a ridge of rocks and shelves, which confines the water so that it precipitates itself like a cataract; and thus the higher the flood rises, the deeper must the fall be; and the natural result of all is a whirlpool or vortex, the prodigious suction of which is sufficiently known by lesser experiments." These are the words of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica.' Kircher and others imagine that in the centre of the channel of the Maelstrom is an abyss penetrating the globe, and issuing in some very remote part,—the Gulf of Bothnia being somewhat decidedly named in one instance. This opinion, idle in itself, was the one to which, as I gazed, my imagination most readily assented; and mentioning it to the guide, I was rather surprised to hear him say that although it was the view almost universally entertained of the subject by the Norwegians, it nevertheless was not his own. As to the former notion, he confessed his inability to comprehend it: and here I agreed with him; for however conclusive on paper, it becomes altogether unintelligible, and even absurd, amid the thunder of the abyss.

"You have had a good look at the whirl now," said the old man; "and if you will creep round this crag, so as to get in its lee, and deaden the roar of the water, I will tell you a story that will convince you I ought to know something of the Moskoe-ström."

I placed myself as desired, and he proceeded.

"Myself and my two brothers once owned a schooner-rigged smack of about seventy tons burthen, with which we were in the habit of fishing among the islands beyond Moskoe, nearly to Vurrgh. In all violent eddies at sea there is good fishing, at proper opportunities, if one has only the courage to attempt it; but among the whole of the Lofoden coastmen, we three were the only ones who made a regular business of going out to the islands, as I tell you. The usual grounds are a great way lower down to the southward. There fish can be got at all hours, without much risk, and therefore these places are preferred. The choice spots over here among the rocks, however, not only yield the finest variety, but in far greater abundance; so that we often got in a single day what the more timid of the craft could not scrape together in a week. In fact, we made it a matter of desperate speculation: the risk of life standing instead of labor, and courage answering for capital.

"We kept the smack in a cove about five miles higher up the coast than this; and it was our practice, in fine weather, to take advantage of the fifteen minutes' slack to push across the main channel of the Moskoe-ström, far above the pool, and then drop down upon anchorage somewhere near Otterholm, or Sandflesen, where the eddies are not so violent as elsewhere. Here we used to remain until nearly time for slack water again, when we weighed and made for home. We never set out upon this expedition without a steady side wind for going and coming,—one that we felt sure would not fail us before our return; and we seldom made a miscalculation upon this point. Twice, during six years, we were forced to stay all night at anchor on account of a dead calm, which is a rare thing indeed just about here; and once we had to remain on the grounds nearly a week, starving to death, owing to a gale which blew up shortly after our arrival, and made the channel too boisterous to be thought of. Upon this occasion we should have been driven out to sea in spite of everything (for the whirlpools threw us round and round so violently, that at length we fouled our anchor and dragged it), if it had not been that we drifted into one of the innumerable cross-currents,—here to-day and gone to-morrow,—which drove us under the lee of Flimen, where by good luck we brought up.

"I could not tell you the twentieth part of the difficulties we encountered 'on the ground,'—it is a bad spot to be in, even in good weather: but we made shift always to run the gantlet of the Moskoe-ström itself without accident; although at times my heart has been in my mouth when we happened to be a minute or so behind or before the slack. The wind sometimes was not as strong as we thought it at starting; and then we made rather less way than we could wish, while the current rendered the smack unmanageable. My eldest brother had a son eighteen years old, and I had two stout boys of my own. These would have been of great assistance in such times, in using the sweeps as well as afterward in fishing; but somehow, although we ran the risk ourselves, we had not the heart to let the young ones get into the danger—for after all said and done, it *was* a horrible danger, and that is the truth.

"It is now within a few days of three years since what I am going to tell you occurred. It was on the 10th of July, 18—; a day which the people of this part of the world will never forget, for it was one in which blew the most terrible hurricane that ever came out of the heavens. And yet all the morning, and indeed until late in the afternoon, there was a gentle and steady breeze from the southwest, while the sun shone brightly, so that the oldest seaman among us could not have foreseen what was to follow.

"The three of us—my two brothers and myself—had crossed over to the islands about two o'clock P. M., and soon nearly loaded the smack with fine fish; which, we all remarked, were more plenty that day than we had ever known them. It was just seven, *by my watch*, when we weighed and started for home, so as to make the worst of the Ström at slack water, which we knew would be at eight.

"We set out with a fresh wind at our starboard quarter, and for some time spanked along at a great rate, never dreaming of danger; for indeed, we saw not the slightest reason to apprehend it. All at once we were taken aback by a breeze from over Helseggen. This was most unusual; something that had never happened to us: and I began to feel a little uneasy, without exactly knowing why. We put the boat on the wind, but could make no headway at all for the eddies; and I was upon the point of proposing to return to the anchorage, when, looking astern, we saw the whole horizon covered with a singular copper-colored cloud that rose with the most amazing velocity.

"In the mean time the breeze that had headed us off fell away; and we were dead becalmed, drifting about in every direction. This state of things, however, did not last long enough to give us time to think about it. In less than a minute the storm was upon us; in less than two the sky was entirely overcast; and what with this and the driving spray, it became suddenly so dark that we could not see each other in the smack.

"Such a hurricane as then blew, it is folly to attempt to describe. The oldest seaman in Norway never experienced anything like it. We had let our sails go by the run before it cleverly took us; but at the first puff, both our masts went by the board as if they had been sawed off — the mainmast taking with it my youngest brother, who had lashed himself to it for safety.

"Our boat was the lightest feather of a thing that ever sat upon water. It had a complete flush deck, with only a small hatch near the bow; and this hatch it had always been our custom to batten down when about to cross the Ström, by way of precaution against chopping seas. But for this circumstance we should have foundered at once; for we lay entirely buried for some moments. How my elder brother escaped destruction I cannot say, for I never had an opportunity of ascertaining. For my part, as soon as I had let the foresail run, I threw myself flat on deck, with my feet against the narrow gunwale of the bow, and with my hands grasping a ring-bolt near the foot of the foremast. It was mere instinct that prompted me to do this, which was undoubtedly the very best thing I could have done; for I was too much flurried to think.

"For some moments we were completely deluged, I say; and all this time I held my breath, and clung to the bolt. When I could stand it no longer I raised myself upon my knees, still keeping hold with my hands, and thus got my head clear. Presently our little boat gave herself a shake, just as a dog does in coming out of the water, and thus rid herself in some measure of the seas. I was now trying to get the better of the stupor that had come over me, and to collect my senses so as to see what was to be done, when I felt somebody grasp my arm. It was my elder brother,— and my heart leaped for joy, for I had made sure that he was overboard; but the next moment all this joy was turned into horror,—for he put his mouth close to my ear, and screamed out the word '*Moskoe-ström!*'

"No one will ever know what my feelings were at that moment. I shook from head to foot as if I had the most violent fit of the ague. I knew what he meant by that one word well enough—I knew what he wished to make me understand. With the wind that now drove us on, we were bound for the whirl of the Ström, and nothing could save us!

"You perceive that in crossing the Ström *channel*, we always went a long way up above the whirl, even in the calmest weather, and then had to wait and watch carefully for the slack; but now we were driving right upon the pool itself, and in such a hurricane as this! 'To be sure,' I thought, 'we shall get there just about the slack,—there is some little hope in that;' but in the moment I cursed myself for being so great a fool as to dream of hope at all. I knew very well that we were doomed, had we been ten times a ninety-gun ship.

"By this time the first fury of the tempest had spent itself, or perhaps we did not feel it much as we scudded before it; but at all events the seas, which at first had been kept down by the wind, and lay flat and frothing, now got up into absolute mountains. A singular change, too, had come over the heavens. Around in every direction it was still as black as pitch; but nearly overhead there burst out, all at once, a circular rift of clear sky,—as clear as I ever saw, and of a deep bright blue,—and through it there blazed forth the full moon with a lustre that I never before knew her to wear. She lit up everything about us with the greatest distinctness—but O God, what a scene it was to light up!

"I now made one or two attempts to speak to my brother; but in some manner which I could not understand, the din had so increased that I could not make him hear a single word, although I screamed at the top of my voice in his ear. Presently he shook his head, looking as pale as death, and held up one of his fingers, as if to say, '*Listen!*'

"At first I could not make out what he meant; but soon a hideous thought flashed upon me. I dragged my watch from its fob. It was not going. I glanced at its face by the moonlight, and then burst into tears as I flung it far away into the ocean. *It had run down at seven o'clock! We were behind the time of the slack, and the whirl of the Ström was in full fury!*

"When a boat is well built, properly trimmed, and not deep laden, the waves in a strong gale, when she is going large, seem always to slip from beneath her — which appears very strange to a landsman; and this is what is called *riding*, in sea phrase.

"Well, so far we had ridden the swells very cleverly; but presently a gigantic sea happened to take us right under the counter, and bore us with it as it rose — up — up — as if into the sky. I would not have believed that any wave could rise so high. And then down we came with a sweep, a slide, and a plunge, that made me feel sick and dizzy, as if I was falling from some lofty mountain-top in a dream. But while we were up I had thrown a quick glance around; and that one glance was all-sufficient. I saw our exact position in an instant. The Moskoe-ström whirlpool was about a quarter of a mile dead ahead; but no more like the every-day Moskoe-ström, than the whirl as you now see it is like a mill-race. If I had not known where we were, and what we had to expect, I should not have recognized the place at all. As it was, I involuntarily closed my eyes in horror. The lids clenched themselves together as if in a spasm.

"It could not have been more than two minutes afterward until we suddenly felt the waves subside, and were enveloped in foam. The boat made a sharp half-turn to larboard, and then shot off in its new direction like a thunderbolt. At the same moment the roaring noise of the water was completely drowned in a kind of shrill shriek; such a sound as you might imagine given out by the water pipes of many thousand steam-vessels, letting off their steam all together. We were now in the belt of surf that always surrounds the whirl; and I thought, of course, that another moment would plunge us into the abyss — down which we could only see indistinctly on account of the amazing velocity with which we were borne along. The boat did not seem to sink into the water at all, but to skim like an air bubble upon the surface of the surge. Her starboard side was next the whirl, and on the larboard arose the world of ocean we had left. It stood like a huge writhing wall between us and the horizon.

"It may appear strange,— but now, when we were in the very jaws of the gulf, I felt more composed than when we were only approaching it. Having made up my mind to hope no more, I got rid of a great deal of that terror which unmanned me at first. I suppose it was despair that strung my nerves.

"It may look like boasting, but what I tell you is truth: I began to reflect how magnificent a thing it was to die in such a manner, and how foolish it was in me to think of so paltry a consideration as my own individual life, in view of so wonderful a manifestation of God's power. I do believe that I blushed with shame when this idea crossed my mind. After a little while I became possessed with the keenest curiosity about the whirl itself. I positively felt a *wish* to explore its depths, even at the sacrifice I was going to make; and my principal grief was that I should never be able to tell my old companions on shore about the mysteries I should see. These, no doubt, were singular fancies to occupy a man's mind in such extremity — and I have often thought since that the revolutions of the boat around the pool might have rendered me a little light-headed.

"There was another circumstance which tended to restore my self-possession; and this was the cessation of the wind, which could not reach us in our present situation — for as you saw yourself, the belt of surf is considerably lower than the general bed of the ocean, and this latter now towered above us, a high, black, mountainous ridge. If you have never been at sea in a heavy gale, you can form no idea of the confusion of mind occasioned by the wind and spray together. They blind, deafen, and strangle you, and take away all power of action or reflection. But we were now, in a great measure, rid of these annoyances; just as death-condemned felons in prison are allowed petty indulgences, forbidden them while their doom is yet uncertain.

"How often we made the circuit of the belt it is impossible to say. We careered round and round for perhaps an hour, flying rather than floating, getting gradually more and more into the middle of the surge, and then nearer and nearer to its horrible inner edge. All this time I had never let go of the ring-bolt. My brother was at the stern, holding on to a small empty water cask which had been securely lashed under the coop of the counter, and was the only thing on deck that had not been swept overboard when the gale first took us. As we approached the brink of the pit, he let go his hold upon this and made for the ring, from which in the agony of his terror he endeavored to force my hands, as it was not large enough to afford us both a secure grasp. I never felt deeper grief than when I saw him attempt this act, although I knew he was a madman when he did it — a raving maniac through sheer fright. I did not care, however, to contest the point with him. I knew it could make no difference whether either of us held on at all; so I let him have the bolt, and went astern to the cask. This there was no great difficulty in doing; for the smack flew round steadily enough, and upon an even keel—only swaying to and fro with the immense sweeps and swelters of the whirl. Scarcely had I secured myself in my new position when we gave a wild lurch to starboard and rushed headlong into the abyss. I muttered a hurried prayer to God, and thought all was over.

"As I felt the sickening sweep of the descent, I had instinctively tightened my hold upon the barrel and closed my eyes. For some seconds I dared not open them; while I expected instant destruction, and wondered that I was not already in my death-struggles with the water. But moment after moment elapsed. I still lived. The sense of falling had ceased; and the motion of the vessel seemed much as it had been before while in the belt of foam, with the exception that she now lay more along. I took courage, and looked once again upon the scene.

"Never shall I forget the sensation of awe, horror, and admiration with which I gazed about me. The boat appeared to be hanging, as if by magic, midway down upon the interior surface of a funnel vast in circumference, prodigious in depth, and whose perfectly smooth sides might have been mistaken for ebony but for the bewildering rapidity with which they spun around, and for the gleaming and ghastly radiance they shot forth as the rays of the full moon, from that circular rift amid the clouds which I have already described, streamed in a flood of golden glory along the black walls and far away down into the inmost recesses of the abyss.

"At first I was too much confused to observe anything accurately. The general burst of terrific grandeur was all that I beheld. When I recovered myself a little, however, my gaze fell instinctively downward. In this direction I was able to obtain an unobstructed view, from the manner in which the smack hung on the inclined surface of the pool. She was quite upon an even keel,—that is to say, her deck lay in a plane parallel with that of the water; but this latter sloped at an angle of more than forty-five degrees, so that we seemed to be lying upon our beam ends. I could not help observing, nevertheless, that I had scarcely more difficulty in maintaining my hold and footing in this situation than if we had been upon a dead level; and this, I suppose, was owing to the speed at which we revolved.

"The rays of the moon seemed to search the very bottom of the profound gulf; but still I could make out nothing distinctly, on account of a thick mist in which everything there was enveloped, and over which there hung a magnificent rainbow, like that narrow and tottering bridge which Mussulmans say is the only pathway between Time and Eternity. This mist, or spray, was no doubt occasioned by the clashing of the great walls of the funnel, as they all met together at the bottom; but the yell that went up to the heavens from out of that mist, I dare not attempt to describe.

"Our first slide into the abyss itself, from the belt of foam above, had carried us to a great distance down the slope; but our further descent was by no means proportionate. Round and round we swept; not with any uniform movement, but in dizzying swings and jerks, that sent us sometimes only a few hundred yards, sometimes nearly the complete circuit of the whirl. Our progress downward, at each revolution, was slow but very perceptible.

"Looking about me upon the wide waste of liquid ebony on which we were thus borne, I perceived that our boat was not the only object in the embrace of the whirl. Both above and below us were visible fragments of vessels, large masses of building timber and trunks of trees, with many smaller articles, such as pieces of house furniture, broken boxes, barrels, and staves. I have already described the unnatural curiosity which had taken the place of my original terrors. It appeared to grow upon me as I drew nearer and nearer to my dreadful doom. I now began to watch, with a strange interest, the numerous things that floated in our company. I *must* have been delirious, for I even sought *amusement* in speculating upon the relative velocities of their several descents toward the foam below. 'This fir-tree,' I found myself at one time saying, 'will certainly be the next thing that takes the awful plunge and disappears;' and then I was disappointed to find that the wreck of a Dutch merchant ship overtook it and went down before. At length, after making several guesses of this nature, and being deceived in all,—this fact, the fact of my invariable miscalculation, set me upon a train of reflection that made my limbs again tremble, and my heart beat heavily once more.

"It was not a new terror that thus affected me, but the dawn of a more exciting *hope*. This hope arose partly from memory, and partly from present observation. I called to mind the great variety of buoyant matter that strewed the coast of Lofoden, having been absorbed and then thrown forth by the Moskoe-ström. By far the greater number of the articles were shattered in the most extraordinary way,—so chafed and roughened as to have the appearance of being stuck full of splinters; but then I distinctly recollected that there were *some* of them which were not disfigured at all. Now, I could not account for this difference except by supposing that the roughened fragments were the only ones which had been *completely absorbed;* that the others had entered the whirl at so late a period of the tide, or from some reason had descended so slowly after entering, that they did not reach the bottom before the turn of the flood came,—or of the ebb, as the case might be. I conceived it possible, in either instance, that they might be thus whirled up again to the level of the ocean without undergoing the fate of those which had been drawn in more early or absorbed more rapidly. I made also three important observations. The first was, that as a general rule, the larger the bodies were, the more rapid their descent; the second, that between two masses of equal extent, the one spherical and the other *of any other shape*, the superiority in speed of descent was with the sphere; the third, that between two masses of equal size, the one cylindrical, and the other of any other shape, the cylinder was absorbed the more slowly. Since my escape I have had several conversations on this subject with an old schoolmaster of the district; and it was from him that I learned the use of the words 'cylinder' and 'sphere.' He explained to me—although I have forgotten the explanation—how what I observed was in fact the natural consequence of the forms of the floating fragments; and showed me how it happened that a cylinder, swimming in a vortex, offered more resistance to its suction, and was drawn in with greater difficulty, than an equally bulky body of any form whatever.

"There was one startling circumstance which went a great way in enforcing these observations, and rendering me anxious to turn them to account: and this was, that at every revolution we passed something like a barrel, or else the yard or the mast of the vessel; while many of those things which had been on our level when I first opened my eyes upon the wonders of the whirlpool, were now high up above us, and seemed to have moved but little from their original station.

"I no longer hesitated what to do. I resolved to lash myself securely to the water cask upon which I now held, to cut it loose from the counter, and to throw myself with it into the water. I attracted my brother's attention by signs, pointed to the floating barrels that came near us, and did everything in my power to make him understand what I was about to do. I thought at length that he comprehended my design; but whether this was the case or not, he shook his head despairingly, and refused to move from his station by the ringbolt. It was impossible to reach him; the emergency admitted of no delay: and so with a bitter struggle I resigned him to his fate, fastened myself to the cask by means of the lashings which secured it to the counter, and precipitated myself with it into the sea, without another moment's hesitation.

"The result was precisely what I had hoped it might be. As it is myself who now tell you this tale,—as you see that I *did* escape, and as you are already in possession of the mode in which this escape was effected, and must therefore anticipate all that I have further to say, I will bring my story quickly to conclusion. It might have been an hour or thereabout after my quitting the smack, when, having descended to a vast distance beneath me, it made three or four wild gyrations in rapid succession, and bearing my loved brother with it, plunged headlong, at once and forever, into the chaos of foam below. The barrel to which I was attached sunk very little farther than half the distance between the bottom of the gulf and the spot at which I leaped overboard, before a great change took place in the character of the whirlpool. The slope of the sides of the vast funnel became momently less and less steep. The gyrations of the whirl grew gradually less and less violent. By degrees the froth and the rainbow disappeared, and the bottom of the gulf seemed slowly to uprise. The sky was clear, the winds had gone down, and the full moon was setting radiantly in the west, when I found myself on the surface of the ocean, in full view of the shores of Lofoden, and above the spot where the pool of the Moskoe-ström *had been*. It was the hour of the slack; but the sea still heaved in mountainous waves from the effects of the hurricane. I was borne violently into the channel of the Ström, and in a few minutes was hurried down the coast into the 'grounds' of the fishermen. A boat picked me up,—exhausted from fatigue, and (now that the danger was removed) speechless from the memory of its horror. Those who drew me on board were my old mates and daily companions; but they knew me no more than they would have known a traveler from the spirit-land. My hair, which had been raven-black the day before, was as white as you see it now. They say too that the whole expression of my countenance had changed. I told them my story; they did not believe it. I now tell it to *you;* and I can scarcely expect you to put more faith in it than did the merry fishermen of Lofoden."

THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER

Son cœur est un luth suspendu;
Sitôt qu'on le touche il résonne.
—DE BÉRANGER.

DURING the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country; and at length found myself, as the shades of evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher. I know not how it was, but with the first glimpse of the building a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible. I looked upon the scene before me—upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain, upon the bleak walls, upon the vacant eye-like windows, upon a few rank sedges, and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees—with an utter depression of soul, which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the after-dream of the reveler upon opium—the bitter lapse into every-day life—the hideous dropping of the veil. There was an iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart—an unredeemed dreariness of thought which no goading of the imagination could torture into aught of the sublime. What was it, I paused to think,—what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble; nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded upon me as I pondered. I was forced to fall back upon the unsatisfactory conclusion, that while beyond doubt there *are* combinations of very simple natural objects which have the power of thus affecting us, still the analysis of this power lies among considerations beyond our depth. It was possible, I reflected, that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene,—of the details of the picture,—would be sufficient to modify, or perhaps to annihilate, its capacity for sorrowful impression; and acting upon this idea, I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled lustre by the dwelling, and gazed down—but with a shudder more thrilling than before—upon the remodeled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant and eye-like windows.

Nevertheless, in this mansion of gloom I now proposed to myself a sojourn of some weeks. Its proprietor, Roderick Usher, had been one of my boon companions in boyhood; but many years had elapsed since our last meeting. A letter, however, had lately reached me in a distant part of the country—a letter from him—which in its wildly importunate nature had admitted of no other than a personal reply. The MS. gave evidence of nervous agitation. The writer spoke of acute bodily illness; of a mental disorder which oppressed him; and of an earnest desire to see me, as his best and indeed his only personal friend, with a view of attempting, by the cheerfulness of my society, some alleviation of his malady. It was the manner in which all this, and much more, was said,—it was the apparent *heart* that went with his request,—which allowed me no room for hesitation; and I accordingly obeyed forthwith what I still considered a very singular summons.

Although as boys we had been even intimate associates, yet I really knew little of my friend. His reserve had been always excessive and habitual. I was aware, however, that his very ancient family had been noted, time out of mind, for a peculiar sensibility of temperament; displaying itself through long ages in many works of exalted art, and manifested of late in repeated deeds of munificent yet unobtrusive charity, as well as in a passionate devotion to the intricacies, perhaps even more than to the orthodox and easily recognizable beauties, of musical science. I had learned too the very remarkable fact that the stem of the Usher race, all time-honored as it was, had put forth at no period any enduring branch; in other words, that the entire family lay in the direct line of descent, and had always, with very trifling and very temporary variation, so lain. It was this deficiency, I considered, while running over in thought the perfect keeping of the character of the premises with the accredited character of the people, and while speculating upon the possible influence which the one, in the long lapse of centuries, might have exercised upon the other,—it was this deficiency perhaps of collateral issue, and the consequent undeviating transmission from sire to son of the patrimony with the name, which had at length so identified the two as to merge the original title of the estate in the quaint and equivocal appellation of the «House of Usher,»—an appellation which seemed to include, in the minds of the peasantry who used it, both the family and the family mansion.

I have said that the sole effect of my somewhat childish experiment—that of looking down within the tarn—had been to deepen the first singular impression. There can be no doubt that the consciousness of the rapid increase of my superstition—for why should I not so term it?—served mainly to accelerate the increase itself. Such, I have long known, is the paradoxical law of all sentiments having terror as a basis. And it might have been for this reason only, that when I again uplifted my eyes to the house itself from its image in the pool, there grew in my mind a strange fancy; a fancy so ridiculous, indeed, that I but mention it to show the vivid force of the sensations which oppressed me. I had so worked upon my imagination as really to believe that about the whole mansion and domain there hung an atmosphere peculiar to themselves and their immediate vicinity; an atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven, but which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the gray wall, and the silent tarn; a pestilent and mystic vapor, dull, sluggish, faintly discernible, and leaden-hued.

Shaking off from my spirit what *must* have been a dream, I scanned more narrowly the real aspect of the building. Its principal feature seemed to be that of an excessive antiquity. The discoloration of ages had been great. Minute fungi overspread the whole exterior, hanging in a fine tangled web-work from the eaves. Yet all this was apart from any extraordinary dilapidation. No portion of the masonry had fallen; and there appeared to be a wild inconsistency between its still perfect adaptation of parts and the crumbling condition of the individual stones. In this there was much that reminded me of the specious totality of old woodwork which had rotted for long years in some neglected vault, with no disturbance from the breath of the external air. Beyond this indication of extensive decay, however, the fabric gave little token of instability. Perhaps the eye of a scrutinizing observer might have discovered a barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zigzag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn.

Noticing these things, I rode over a short causeway to the house. A servant in waiting took my horse, and I entered the Gothic archway of the hall. A valet of stealthy step thence conducted me, in silence, through many dark and intricate passages in my progress to the studio of his master. Much that I encountered on the way contributed, I know not how, to heighten the vague sentiments of which I have already spoken. While the objects around me — while the carvings of the ceilings, the sombre tapestries of the walls, the ebon blackness of the floors, and the phantasmagoric armorial trophies which rattled as I strode, were but matters to which, or to such as which, I had been accustomed from my infancy,— while I hesitated not to acknowledge how familiar was all this,— I still wondered to find how unfamiliar were the fancies which ordinary images were stirring up. On one of the staircases I met the physician of the family. His countenance, I thought, wore a mingled expression of low cunning and perplexity. He accosted me with trepidation and passed on. The valet now threw open a door and ushered me into the presence of his master.

The room in which I found myself was very large and lofty. The windows were long, narrow, and pointed, and at so vast a distance from the black oaken floor as to be altogether inaccessible from within. Feeble gleams of encrimsoned light made their way through the trellised panes, and served to render sufficiently distinct the more prominent objects around; the eye, however, struggled in vain to reach the remoter angles of the chamber, or the recesses of the vaulted and fretted ceiling. Dark draperies hung upon the walls. The general furniture was profuse, comfortless, antique, and tattered. Many books and musical instruments lay scattered about, but failed to give any vitality to the scene. I felt that I breathed an atmosphere of sorrow. An air of stern, deep, and irredeemable gloom hung over and pervaded all.

Upon my entrance, Usher arose from a sofa on which he had been lying at full length, and greeted me with a vivacious warmth which had much in it, I at first thought, of an overdone cordiality,—of the constrained effort of the *ennuyé* man of the world. A glance, however, at his countenance, convinced me of his perfect sincerity. We sat down; and for some moments, while he spoke not, I gazed upon him with a feeling half of pity, half of awe. Surely, man had never before so terribly altered, in so brief a period, as had Roderick Usher! It was with difficulty that I could bring myself to admit the identity of the wan being before me with the companion of my early boyhood. Yet the character of his face had been at all times remarkable. A cadaverousness of complexion; an eye large, liquid, and luminous beyond comparison; lips somewhat thin and very pallid, but of a surpassingly beautiful curve; a nose of a delicate Hebrew model, but with a breadth of nostril unusual in similar formations; a finely molded chin, speaking, in its want of prominence, of a want of moral energy; hair of a more than web-like softness and tenuity,—these features, with an inordinate expansion above the regions of the temple, made up altogether a countenance not easily forgotten. And now in the mere exaggeration of the prevailing character of these features, and of the expression they were wont to convey, lay so much of change that I doubted to whom I spoke. The now ghastly pallor of the skin, and the now miraculous lustre of the eye, above all things startled and even awed me. The silken hair, too, had been suffered to grow all unheeded; and as in its wild gossamer texture it floated rather than fell about the face, I could not, even with effort, connect its arabesque expression with any idea of simple humanity.

In the manner of my friend I was at once struck with an incoherence—an inconsistency; and I soon found this to arise from a series of feeble and futile struggles to overcome a habitual trepidancy—an excessive nervous agitation. For something of this nature I had indeed been prepared, no less by his letter than by reminiscences of certain boyish traits, and by conclusions deduced from his peculiar physical conformation and temperament. His action was alternately vivacious and sullen. His voice varied rapidly from a tremulous indecision (when the animal spirits seemed utterly in abeyance) to that species of energetic concision—that abrupt, weighty, unhurried, and hollow-sounding enunciation — that leaden, self-balanced, and perfectly modulated guttural utterance, which may be observed in the lost drunkard, or the irreclaimable eater of opium, during the periods of his most intense excitement.

It was thus that he spoke of the object of my visit, of his earnest desire to see me, and of the solace he expected me to afford him. He entered at some length into what he conceived to be the nature of his malady. It was, he said, a constitutional and a family evil, and one for which he despaired to find a remedy; — a mere nervous affection, he immediately added, which would undoubtedly soon pass off. It displayed itself in a host of unnatural sensations. Some of these, as he detailed them, interested and bewildered me; although perhaps the terms and the general manner of the narration had their weight. He suffered much from a morbid acuteness of the senses: the most insipid food was alone endurable; he could wear only garments of certain texture; the odors of all flowers were oppressive; his eyes were tortured by even a faint light; and there were but peculiar sounds, and these from stringed instruments, which did not inspire him with horror.

To an anomalous species of terror I found him a bounden slave. "I shall perish," said he, "I *must* perish, in this deplorable folly. Thus, thus, and not otherwise, shall I be lost. I dread the events of the future, not in themselves, but in their results. I shudder at the thought of any, even the most trivial, incident which may operate upon this intolerable agitation of soul. I have indeed no abhorrence of danger, except in its absolute effect,— in terror. In this unnerved — in this pitiable condition, I feel that the period will sooner or later arrive when I must abandon life and reason together, in some struggle with the grim phantasm, FEAR."

I learned moreover at intervals, and through broken and equivocal hints, another singular feature of his mental condition. He was enchained by certain superstitious impressions in regard to the dwelling which he tenanted, and whence for many years he had never ventured forth — in regard to an influence whose supposititious force was conveyed in terms too shadowy here to be restated — an influence which some peculiarities in the mere form and substance of his family mansion had (by dint of long sufferance, he said) obtained over his spirit — an effect which the *physique* of the gray walls and turrets, and of the dim tarn into which they all looked down, had at length brought about upon the *morale* of his existence.

He admitted, however, although with hesitation, that much of the peculiar gloom which thus afflicted him could be traced to a more natural and far more palpable origin; to the severe and long-continued illness — indeed, to the evidently approaching dissolution — of a tenderly beloved sister, his sole companion for long years, his last and only relative on earth. "Her decease," he said, with a bitterness which I can never forget, "would leave him (him the hopeless and the frail) the last of the ancient race of the Ushers." While he spoke, the lady Madeline (for so was she called) passed slowly through a remote portion of the apartment, and without having noticed my presence, disappeared. I regarded her with an utter astonishment not unmingled with dread; and yet I found it impossible to account for such feelings. A sensation of stupor oppressed me, as my eyes followed her retreating steps. When a door at length closed upon her, my glance sought instinctively and eagerly the countenance of the brother; but he had buried his face in his hands, and I could only perceive that a far more than ordinary wanness had overspread the emaciated fingers through which trickled many passionate tears.

The disease of the lady Madeline had long baffled the skill of her physicians. A settled apathy, a gradual wasting away of the person, and frequent although transient affections of a partially cataleptical character, were the usual diagnosis. Hitherto she had steadily borne up against the pressure of her malady, and had not betaken herself finally to bed; but on the closing in of the evening of my arrival at the house, she succumbed (as her brother told me at night with inexpressible agitation) to the prostrating power of the destroyer; and I learned that the glimpse I had obtained of her person would thus probably be the last I should obtain — that the lady, at least while living, would be seen by me no more.

For several days ensuing, her name was unmentioned by either Usher or myself; and during this period I was busied in earnest endeavors to alleviate the melancholy of my friend. We painted and read together; or I listened, as if in a dream, to the wild improvisations of his speaking guitar. And thus, as a closer and still closer intimacy admitted me more unreservedly into the recesses of his spirit, the more bitterly did I perceive the futility of all attempts at cheering a mind from which darkness, as if an inherent positive quality, poured forth upon all objects of the moral and physical universe, in one unceasing radiation of gloom.

I shall ever bear about me a memory of the many solemn hours I thus spent alone with the master of the House of Usher. Yet I should fail in any attempt to convey an idea of the exact character of the studies or of the occupations in which he involved me, or led me the way. An excited and highly distempered ideality threw a sulphurous lustre over all. His long improvised dirges will ring forever in my ears. Among other things, I hold painfully in mind a certain singular perversion and amplification of the wild air of the last waltz of Von Weber. From the paintings over which his elaborate fancy brooded, and which grew, touch by touch, into vaguenesses at which I shuddered,— the more thrillingly because I shuddered knowing not why; from these paintings (vivid as their images now are before me) I would in vain endeavor to educe more than a small portion which should lie within the compass of merely written words. By the utter simplicity, by the nakedness of his designs, he arrested and overawed attention. If ever mortal painted an idea, that mortal was Roderick Usher. For me at least — in the circumstances then surrounding me — there arose out of the pure abstractions which the hypochondriac contrived to throw upon his canvas, an intensity of intolerable awe, no shadow of which felt I ever yet in the contemplation of the certainly glowing yet too concrete reveries of Fuseli.

One of the phantasmagoric conceptions of my friend, partaking not so rigidly of the spirit of abstraction, may be shadowed forth, although feebly, in words. A small picture presented the interior of an immensely long and rectangular vault or tunnel, with low walls, smooth, white, and without interruption or device. Certain accessory points of the design served well to convey the idea that this excavation lay at an exceeding depth below the surface of the earth. No outlet was observed in any portion of its vast extent, and no torch or other artificial source of light was discernible; yet a flood of intense rays rolled throughout, and bathed the whole in a ghastly and inappropriate splendor.

I have just spoken of that morbid condition of the auditory nerve which rendered all music intolerable to the sufferer, with the exception of certain effects of stringed instruments. It was perhaps the narrow limits to which he thus confined himself upon the guitar, which gave birth, in great measure, to the fantastic character of his performances. But the fervid *facility* of his impromptus could not be so accounted for. They must have been, and were, in the notes as well as in the words of his wild fantasias (for he not unfrequently accompanied himself with rhymed verbal improvisations), the result of that intense mental collectedness and concentration to which I have previously alluded as observable only in particular moments of the highest artificial excitement. The words of one of these rhapsodies I have easily remembered. I was perhaps the more forcibly impressed with it as he gave it, because in the under or mystic current of its meaning I fancied that I perceived, and for the first time, a full consciousness on the part of Usher of the tottering of his lofty reason upon her throne. The verses, which were entitled 'The Haunted Palace,' ran very nearly, if not accurately, thus:—

In the greenest of our valleys,
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace —
Radiant palace — reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion —
It stood there!
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair.

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow;
(This — all this — was in the olden
Time long ago;)
And every gentle air that dallied,
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A wingèd odor went away.

Wanderers in that happy valley
Through two luminous windows saw
Spirits moving musically
To a lute's well-tunèd law,
Round about a throne, where sitting
(Porphyrogene!)
In state his glory well befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate;
(Ah, let us mourn, for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him, desolate!)
And round about his home, the glory
That blushed and bloomed
Is but a dim remembered story
Of the old time entombed.

And travelers now within that valley,
Through the red-litten windows, see
Vast forms that move fantastically
To a discordant melody;
While like a rapid, ghastly river,
Through the pale door,
A hideous throng rush out forever,
And laugh — but smile no more.

I well remember that suggestions arising from this ballad led us into a train of thought wherein there became manifest an opinion of Usher's, which I mention not so much on account of its novelty (for other men have thought thus) as on account of the pertinacity with which he maintained it. This opinion, in its general form, was that of the sentience of all vegetable things. But in his disordered fancy, the idea had assumed a more daring character, and trespassed, under certain conditions, upon the kingdom of inorganization. I lack words to express the full extent or the earnest *abandon* of his persuasion. The belief, however, was connected (as I have previously hinted) with the gray stones of the home of his forefathers. The conditions of the sentience had been here, he imagined, fulfilled in the method of collocation of these stones; in the order of their arrangement, as well as in that of the many fungi which overspread them, and of the decayed trees which stood around; above all, in the long-undisturbed endurance of this arrangement, and in its reduplication in the still waters of the tarn. Its evidence — the evidence of the sentience — was to be seen, he said (and I here started as he spoke), in the gradual yet certain condensation of an atmosphere of their own about the waters and the walls. The result was discoverable, he added, in that silent yet importunate and terrible influence which for centuries had molded the destinies of his family, and which made *him* what I now saw him — what he was. Such opinions need no comment, and I will make none.

Our books — the books which for years had formed no small portion of the mental existence of the invalid — were, as might be supposed, in strict keeping with this character of phantasm. We pored together over such works as the 'Ververt et Chartreuse' of Gresset; the 'Belphegor' of Machiavelli; the 'Heaven and Hell' of Swedenborg; the 'Subterranean Voyage of Nicholas Klimm,' by Holberg; the 'Chiromancy' of Robert Flud, of Jean D'Indaginé, and of De la Chambre; the 'Journey into the Blue Distance' of Tieck; and the 'City of the Sun' of Campanella. One favorite volume was a small octavo edition of the 'Directorium Inquisitorium,' by the Dominican Eymeric de Gironne; and there were passages in Pomponius Mela, about the old African Satyrs and Œgipans, over which Usher would sit dreaming for hours. His chief delight, however, was found in the perusal of an exceedingly rare and curious book in quarto Gothic, — the manual of a forgotten church, — the 'Vigiliæ Mortuorum secundum Chorum Ecclesiæ Maguntinæ.'

I could not help thinking of the wild ritual of this work, and of its probable influence upon the hypochondriac, when one evening, having informed me abruptly that the lady Madeline was no more, he stated his intention of preserving her corpse for a fortnight (previously to its final interment) in one of the numerous vaults within the main walls of the building. The worldly reason, however, assigned for this singular proceeding, was one which I did not feel at liberty to dispute. The brother had been led to his resolution (so he told me) by consideration of the unusual character of the malady of the deceased, of certain obtrusive and eager inquiries on the part of her medical man, and of the remote and exposed situation of the burial-ground of the family. I will not deny that when I called to mind the sinister countenance of the person whom I met upon the staircase, on the day of my arrival at the house, I had no desire to oppose what I regarded as at best but a harmless, and by no means an unnatural, precaution.

At the request of Usher, I personally aided him in the arrangements for the temporary entombment. The body having been encoffined, we two alone bore it to its rest. The vault in which we placed it (and which had been so long unopened that our torches, half smothered in its oppressive atmosphere, gave us little opportunity for investigation) was small, damp, and entirely without means of admission for light; lying, at great depth, immediately beneath that portion of the building in which was my own sleeping apartment. It had been used, apparently, in remote feudal times, for the worst purposes of a donjon-keep; and in later days as a place of deposit for powder, or some other highly combustible substance,—as a portion of its floor, and the whole interior of a long archway through which we reached it, were carefully sheathed with copper. The door of massive iron had been also similarly protected. Its immense weight caused an unusually sharp grating sound, as it moved upon its hinges.

Having deposited our mournful burden upon tressels within this region of horror, we partially turned aside the yet unscrewed lid of the coffin and looked upon the face of the tenant. A striking similitude between the brother and sister now first arrested my attention; and Usher, divining perhaps my thoughts, murmured out some few words from which I learned that the deceased and himself had been twins, and that sympathies of a scarcely intelligible nature had always existed between them. Our glances, however, rested not long upon the dead; for we could not regard her unawed. The disease which had thus entombed the lady in the maturity of youth had left, as usual in all maladies of a strictly cataleptical character, the mockery of a faint blush upon the bosom and the face, and that suspiciously lingering smile upon the lip which is so terrible in death. We replaced and screwed down the lid; and having secured the door of iron, made our way with toil into the scarcely less gloomy apartments of the upper portion of the house.

And now, some days of bitter grief having elapsed, an observable change came over the features of the mental disorder of my friend. His ordinary manner had vanished. His ordinary occupations were neglected or forgotten. He roamed from chamber to chamber with hurried, unequal, and objectless step. The pallor of his countenance had assumed, if possible, a more ghastly hue; but the luminousness of his eye had entirely gone out. The once occasional huskiness of his tone was heard no more; and a tremulous quaver, as if of extreme terror, habitually characterized his utterance. There were times, indeed, when I thought his unceasingly agitated mind was laboring with some oppressive secret, to divulge which he struggled for the necessary courage. At times again I was obliged to resolve all into the mere inexplicable vagaries of madness; for I beheld him gazing upon vacancy for long hours in an attitude of the profoundest attention, as if listening to some imaginary sound. It was no wonder that his condition terrified—that it infected me. I felt creeping upon me, by slow yet certain degrees, the wild influences of his own fantastic yet impressive superstitions.

It was especially upon retiring to bed late in the night of the seventh or eighth day after the placing of the lady Madeline within the donjon, that I experienced the full power of such feelings. Sleep came not near my couch, while the hours waned and waned away. I struggled to reason off the nervousness which had dominion over me. I endeavored to believe that much if not all of what I felt was due to the bewildering influence of the gloomy furniture of the room,—of the dark and tattered draperies, which, tortured into motion by the breath of a rising tempest, swayed fitfully to and fro upon the walls, and rustled uneasily about the decorations of the bed. But my efforts were fruitless. An irrepressible tremor gradually pervaded my frame; and at length there sat upon my very heart an incubus of utterly causeless alarm. Shaking this off with a gasp and a struggle, I uplifted myself upon the pillows, and peering earnestly within the intense darkness of the chamber, hearkened—I know not why, except that an instinctive spirit prompted me—certain low and indefinite sounds which came through the pauses of the storm, at long intervals, I knew not whence. Overpowered by an intense sentiment of horror, unaccountable yet unendurable, I threw on my clothes with haste (for I felt that I should sleep no more during the night), and endeavored to arouse myself from the pitiable condition into which I had fallen, by pacing rapidly to and fro through the apartment.

I had taken but few turns in this manner, when a light step on an adjoining staircase arrested my attention. I presently recognized it as that of Usher. In an instant afterward he rapped with a gentle touch at my door, and entered, bearing a lamp. His countenance was, as usual, cadaverously wan; but moreover, there was a species of mad hilarity in his eyes, and evidently restrained *hysteria* in his whole demeanor. His air appalled me; but anything was preferable to the solitude which had so long endured, and I even welcomed his presence as a relief.

"And you have not seen it?" he said abruptly, after having stared about him for some moments in silence,—"you have not then seen it?—but stay! you shall." Thus speaking, and having carefully shaded his lamp, he hurried to one of the casements, and threw it freely open to the storm.

The impetuous fury of the entering gust nearly lifted us from our feet. It was indeed a tempestuous yet sternly beautiful night, and one wildly singular in its terror and its beauty. A whirlwind had apparently collected its force in our vicinity: for there were frequent and violent alterations in the direction of the wind; and the exceeding density of the clouds (which hung so low as to press upon the turrets of the house) did not prevent our perceiving the lifelike velocity with which they flew careering from all points against each other, without passing away into the distance. I say that even their exceeding density did not prevent our perceiving this; yet we had no glimpse of the moon or stars, nor was there any flashing forth of the lightning. But the under surfaces of the huge masses of agitated vapor, as well as all terrestrial objects immediately around us, were glowing in the unnatural light of a faintly luminous and distinctly visible gaseous exhalation which hung about and enshrouded the mansion.

"You must not—you shall not behold this!" said I shudderingly to Usher, as I led him with a gentle violence from the window to a seat. "These appearances which bewilder you are merely electrical phenomena not uncommon; or it may be that they have their ghastly origin in the rank miasma of the tarn. Let us close this casement: the air is chilling and dangerous to your frame. Here is one of your favorite romances. I will read, and you shall listen; and so we will pass away this terrible night together."

The antique volume which I had taken up was the 'Mad Trist' of Sir Launcelot Canning: but I had called it a favorite of Usher's more in sad jest than in earnest; for in truth there is little in its uncouth and unimaginative prolixity which could have had interest for the lofty and spiritual ideality of my friend. It was, however, the only book immediately at hand; and I indulged a vague hope that the excitement which now agitated the hypochondriac might find relief (for the history of mental disorder is full of similar anomalies) even in the extremeness of the folly which I should read. Could I have judged, indeed, by the wild overstrained air of vivacity with which he hearkened, or apparently hearkened, to the words of the tale, I might well have congratulated myself upon the success of my design.

I had arrived at that well-known portion of the story where Ethelred, the hero of the Trist, having sought in vain for peaceable admission into the dwelling of the hermit, proceeds to make good an entrance by force. Here, it will be remembered, the words of the narrative run thus: —

«And Ethelred, who was by nature of a doughty heart, and who was now mighty withal on account of the powerfulness of the wine which he had drunken, waited no longer to hold parley with the hermit, who in sooth was of an obstinate and maliceful turn: but feeling the rain upon his shoulders, and fearing the rising of the tempest, uplifted his mace outright, and with blows, made quickly room in the plankings of the door for his gauntleted hand; and now pulling therewith sturdily, he so cracked and ripped and tore all asunder, that the noise of the dry and hollow-sounding wood alarumed and reverberated throughout the forest.»

At the termination of this sentence I started, and for a moment paused; for it appeared to me (although I at once concluded that my excited fancy had deceived me) — it appeared to me that from some very remote portion of the mansion, there came indistinctly to my ears what might have been, in its exact similarity of character, the echo (but a stifled and dull one certainly) of the very cracking and ripping sound which Sir Launcelot had so particularly described. It was beyond doubt the coincidence alone which had arrested my attention; for amid the rattling of the sashes of the casements, and the ordinary commingled noises of the still increasing storm, the sound in itself had nothing, surely, which should have interested or disturbed me. I continued the story: —

« But the good champion Ethelred, now entering within the door, was sore enraged and amazed to perceive no signal of the maliceful hermit: but in the stead thereof, a dragon of a scaly and prodigious demeanor, and of a fiery tongue, which sate in guard before a palace of gold, with a floor of silver; and upon the wall there hung a shield of shining brass with this legend enwritten:—

"'Who entereth herein, a conqueror hath bin;
Who slayeth the dragon, the shield he shall win.'

And Ethelred uplifted his mace, and struck upon the head of the dragon, which fell before him, and gave up his pesty breath with a shriek so horrid and harsh, and withal so piercing, that Ethelred had fain to close his ears with his hands against the dreadful noise of it, the like whereof was never before heard."

Here again I paused abruptly, and now with a feeling of wild amazement; for there could be no doubt whatever that in this instance I did actually hear (although from what direction it proceeded, I found it impossible to say) a low and apparently distant, but harsh, protracted, and most unusual screaming or grating sound,—the exact counterpart of what my fancy had already conjured up for the dragon's unnatural shriek as described by the romancer.

Oppressed as I certainly was, upon the occurrence of this second and most extraordinary coincidence, by a thousand conflicting sensations, in which wonder and extreme terror were predominant, I still retained sufficient presence of mind to avoid exciting, by any observation, the sensitive nervousness of my companion. I was by no means certain that he had noticed the sounds in question; although assuredly a strange alteration had during the last few minutes taken place in his demeanor. From a position fronting my own, he had gradually brought round his chair so as to sit with his face to the door of the chamber; and thus I could but partially perceive his features, although I saw that his lips trembled as if he were murmuring inaudibly. His head had dropped upon his breast; yet I knew that he was not asleep, from the wide and rigid opening of the eye as I caught a glance of it in profile. The motion of his body, too, was at variance with this idea; for he rocked from side to side with a gentle yet constant and uniform sway. Having rapidly taken notice of all this, I resumed the narrative of Sir Launcelot, which thus proceeded:—

"And now the champion, having escaped from the terrible fury of the dragon, bethinking himself of the brazen shield, and of the breaking up of the enchantment which was upon it, removed the carcass from out of the way before him, and approached valorously over the silver pavement of the castle to where the shield was upon the wall; which in sooth tarried not for his full coming, but fell down at his feet upon the silver floor, with a mighty great and terrible ringing sound."

No sooner had these syllables passed my lips, than—as if a shield of brass had indeed, at the moment, fallen heavily upon a floor of silver—I became aware of a distinct, hollow, metallic and clamorous, yet apparently muffled reverberation. Completely unnerved, I leaped to my feet; but the measured rocking movement of Usher was undisturbed. I rushed to the chair in which he sat. His eyes were bent fixedly before him, and throughout his whole countenance there reigned a stony rigidity. But as I placed my hand upon his shoulder, there came a strong shudder over his whole person; a sickly smile quivered about his lips, and I saw that he spoke in a low, hurried, and gibbering murmur, as if unconscious of my presence. Bending closely over him, I at length drank in the hideous import of his words.

"Not hear it?—yes, I hear it, and *have* heard it. Long—long—long—many minutes, many hours, many days, have I heard it—yet I dared not—oh, pity me, miserable wretch that I am!—I dared not—I *dared* not speak! *We have put her living in the tomb!* Said I not that my senses were acute? I now tell you that I heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them—many, many days ago—yet I dared not—*I dared not speak!* And now—to-night—Ethelred—ha! ha!—the breaking of the hermit's door, and the death-cry of the dragon, and the clangor of the shield!—say rather the rending of her coffin, and the grating of the iron hinges of her prison, and her struggles within the coppered archway of the vault! Oh, whither shall I fly? Will she not be here anon? Is she not hurrying to upbraid me for my haste? Have I not heard her footstep on the stair? Do I not distinguish that heavy and horrible beating of her heart? Madman!"—here he sprang furiously to his feet, and shrieked out his syllables, as if in the effort he were giving up his soul—"*Madman! I tell you that she now stands without the door!*"

As if in the superhuman energy of his utterance there had been found the potency of a spell—the huge antique panels to which the speaker pointed, threw slowly back upon the instant their ponderous ebony jaws. It was the work of the rushing gust; but then, without those doors there *did* stand the lofty and enshrouded figure of the lady Madeline of Usher. There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame. For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold; then, with a low, moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and in her violent and now final death agonies bore him to the floor a corpse, and a victim to the terror he had anticipated.

From that chamber, and from that mansion, I fled aghast. The storm was still abroad in all its wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway. Suddenly there shot along the path a wild light, and I turned to see whence a gleam so unusual could have issued; for the vast house and its shadows were alone behind me. The radiance was that of the full, setting, and blood-red moon, which now shone vividly through that once barely discernible fissure, of which I have before spoken as extending from the roof of the building, in a zigzag direction, to the base. While I gazed, this fissure rapidly widened; there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind; the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight; my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder; there was a long tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dark tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the «*House of Usher.*»

FOR ANNIE

THANK Heaven! the crisis—
   The danger—is past,
And the lingering illness
   Is over at last—
And the fever called «Living»
   Is conquered at last.

Sadly, I know,
   I am shorn of my strength,
And no muscle I move
   As I lie at full length;
But no matter!—I feel
   I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly
   Now, in my bed,

That any beholder
   Might fancy me dead,—
Might start at beholding me,
   Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,
   The sighing and sobbing,
Are quieted now,
   With that horrible throbbing
At heart;—ah, that horrible,
   Horrible throbbing!

The sickness, the nausea,
   The pitiless pain,
Have ceased, with the fever
   That maddened my brain—
With the fever called «Living»
   That burned in my brain.

And oh! of all tortures,
   That torture the worst
Has abated,—the terrible
   Torture of thirst
For the naphthaline river
   Of Passion accurst;—
I have drank of a water
   That quenches all thirst:

Of a water that flows,
   With a lullaby sound,
From a spring but a very few
   Feet under ground—
From a cavern not very far
   Down under ground.

And ah! let it never
   Be foolishly said
That my room it is gloomy,
   And narrow my bed;
For man never slept
   In a different bed—
And, to *sleep*, you must slumber
   In just such a bed.

My tantalized spirit
   Here blandly reposes,

Forgetting, or never
   Regretting, its roses,—
Its old agitations
   Of myrtles and roses.

For now, while so quietly
   Lying, it fancies
A holier odor
   About it, of pansies,—
A rosemary odor
   Commingled with pansies—
With rue and the beautiful
   Puritan pansies.

And so it lies happily,
   Bathing in many
A dream of the truth
   And the beauty of Annie,—
Drowned in a bath
   Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,
   She fondly caressed,
And then I fell gently
   To sleep on her breast,—
Deeply to sleep
   From the heaven of her breast.

When the light was extinguished
   She covered me warm,
And she prayed to the angels
   To keep me from harm,—
To the queen of the angels
   To shield me from harm.

And I lie so composedly
   Now, in my bed,
(Knowing her love,)
   That you fancy me dead;—
And I rest so contentedly
   Now, in my bed,
(With her love at my breast,)
   That you fancy me dead,—
That you shudder to look at me,
   Thinking me dead.

But my heart it is brighter
   Than all of the many

Stars in the sky,
For it sparkles with Annie;
It glows with the light
Of the love of my Annie,—
With the thought of the light
Of the eyes of my Annie.

SONG FROM ‹THE ASSIGNATION›

Thou wast that all to me, love,
For which my soul did pine:
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain and a shrine,
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers;
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!
Ah, starry Hope, that didst arise
But to be overcast!
A voice from out the Future cries,
«Onward!»—but o'er the Past
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies,
Mute—motionless—aghast!

For alas! alas! with me
The light of life is o'er.
«No more—no more—no more»
(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
«Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar!»

Now all my hours are trances;
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy dark eye glances
And where thy footstep gleams,
In what ethereal dances,
By what Italian streams.

Alas for that accursed time
They bore thee o'er the billow,
From Love to titled age and crime,
And an unholy pillow!—
From me, and from our misty clime,
Where weeps the silver willow.

THE RAVEN

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping—rapping at my chamber door.
« 'Tis some visitor,» I muttered, « tapping at my chamber door:
Only this, and nothing more.»

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December,
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow: vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore,
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore,—
Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me—filled me—with fantastic terrors never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating,
« 'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;—
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door:
This it is, and nothing more.»

Presently my soul grew stronger: hesitating then no longer,—
« Sir,» said I, « or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is, I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you.» Here I opened wide the door—
Darkness there, and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there, wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, « Lenore!»
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, « Lenore!»
Merely this, and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping, something louder than before.
« Surely,» said I, « surely that is something at my window-lattice:
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore,—
Let my heart be still a moment, and this mystery explore:
'Tis the wind, and nothing more.»

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,
In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore.
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he:
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door,—
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door,—
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebon bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,
«Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou,» I said, «art sure no craven,
Ghastly, grim, and ancient Raven, wandering from the Nightly shore.
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!»
Quoth the Raven, «Nevermore.»

Much I marveled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door—
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door—
With such name as «Nevermore.»

But the Raven, sitting lonely on that placid bust, spoke only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.
Nothing further then he uttered; not a feather then he fluttered:
Till I scarcely more than muttered, «Other friends have flown before!
On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my hopes have flown before!»
Then the bird said, «Nevermore.»

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
«Doubtless,» said I, «what it utters is its only stock and store;
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore,—
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
Of 'Never—nevermore!'»

But the Raven still beguiling all my sad soul into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore—
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking «Nevermore.»

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core;
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamplight gloated o'er,—
But whose velvet violet lining with the lamplight gloating o'er,
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
Swung by Seraphim whose footfalls tinkled on the tufted floor.
«Wretch!» I cried, «thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee
Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore!
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe, and forget the lost Lenore!»
Quoth the Raven, «Nevermore.»

«Prophet!» cried I, «thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!—
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted,—
On this home by horror haunted,—tell me truly, I implore,
Is there—*is* there balm in Gilead? Tell me! tell me, I implore!»
Quoth the Raven, «Nevermore.»

«Prophet!» cried I, «thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!—
By that heaven that bends above us,—by that God we both adore,—
Tell this soul with sorrow laden, if, within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore.»
Quoth the Raven, «Nevermore.»

«Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!» I shrieked, upstarting.
«Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!»
Quoth the Raven, «Nevermore.»

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
And the lamplight o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore!

THE BELLS

I

Hear the sledges with the bells,—
Silver bells!
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night!
While the stars that oversprinkle
All the heavens, seem to twinkle
With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells,—
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

II

Hear the mellow wedding bells,—
Golden bells!
What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!
Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight!
From the molten golden notes,
And all in tune,
What a liquid ditty floats
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
On the moon!
Oh, from out the sounding cells,
What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!
How it swells!
How it dwells
On the Future! How it tells
Of the rapture that impels
To the swinging and the ringing
Of the bells, bells, bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells,—
To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells!

III

Hear the loud alarum bells,—
Brazen bells!
What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells!
In the startled ear of night
How they scream out their affright!
Too much horrified to speak,
They can only shriek, shriek, shriek,
Out of tune,
In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire,
Leaping higher, higher, higher,
With a desperate desire,
And a resolute endeavor
Now — now to sit, or never,
By the side of the pale-faced moon.
Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
What a tale their terror tells
Of Despair!
How they clang, and clash, and roar!
What a horror they outpour
On the bosom of the palpitating air!
Yet the ear it fully knows,
By the twanging,
And the clanging,
How the danger ebbs and flows;
Yet the ear distinctly tells,
In the jangling,
And the wrangling,
How the danger sinks and swells,
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the bells,
Of the bells,—
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells,—
In the clamor and the clangor of the bells!

IV

Hear the tolling of the bells,—
Iron bells!
What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!
In the silence of the night,
How we shiver with affright
At the melancholy menace of their tone!

For every sound that floats
From the rust within their throats
Is a groan.
And the people — ah, the people —
They that dwell up in the steeple,
All alone,
And who tolling, tolling, tolling,
In that muffled monotone,
Feel a glory in so rolling
On the human heart a stone,—
They are neither man nor woman,
They are neither brute nor human:
They are Ghouls;
And their king it is who tolls,
And he rolls, rolls, rolls,
Rolls a pæan from the bells;
And his merry bosom swells
With the pæan of the bells,
And he dances, and he yells;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the pæan of the bells,—
Of the bells:
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the throbbing of the bells,—
Of the bells, bells, bells,—
To the sobbing of the bells;
Keeping time, time, time,
As he knells, knells, knells,
In a happy Runic rhyme,
To the rolling of the bells,—
Of the bells, bells, bells,—
To the tolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,—
Bells, bells, bells,—
To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

ANNABEL LEE

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know,
By the name of Annabel Lee;

And this maiden she lived with no other thought
   Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and *she* was a child,
   In this kingdom by the sea:
But we loved with a love that was more than love,—
   I and my Annabel Lee;
With a love that the wingèd seraphs of heaven
   Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
   In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
   My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her high-born kinsman came
   And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
   In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
   Went envying her and me:
Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know,
   In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
   Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
   Of those who were older than we—
   Of many far wiser than we:
And neither the angels in heaven above,
   Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
   Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
For the moon never beams without bringing me dreams
   Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise but I feel the bright eyes
   Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,
   In the sepulchre there by the sea,
   In her tomb by the sounding sea.

ULALUME

THE skies they were ashen and sober,
The leaves they were crispèd and sere,—
The leaves they were withering and sere;
It was night in the lonesome October
Of my most immemorial year;
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
In the misty mid-region of Weir,—
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic
Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul,—
Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.
These were days when my heart was volcanic
As the scoriac rivers that roll—
As the lavas that restlessly roll—
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek
In the ultimate climes of the pole,—
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek,
In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,
But our thoughts they were palsied and sere,—
Our memories were treacherous and sere:
For we knew not the month was October,
And we marked not the night of the year;—
(Ah, night of all nights in the year!)
We noted not the dim lake of Auber
(Though once we had journeyed down here),—
Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber,
Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent,
And star-dials pointed to morn,—
As the star-dials hinted of morn,—
At the end of our path a liquescent
And nebulous lustre was born,
Out of which a miraculous crescent
Arose with a duplicate horn,—
Astarte's bediamonded crescent,
Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said, "She is warmer than Dian:
She rolls through an ether of sighs,—
She revels in a region of sighs:

She has seen that the tears are not dry on
These cheeks, where the worm never dies,
And has come past the stars of the Lion
To point us the path to the skies,—
To the Lethean peace of the skies,—
Come up, in despite of the Lion,
To shine on us with her bright eyes,—
Come up through the lair of the Lion,
With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,
Said, "Sadly this star I mistrust,—
Her pallor I strangely mistrust:
Oh, hasten! oh, let us not linger!
Oh, fly!—let us fly!—for we must."
In terror she spoke, letting sink her
Wings until they trailed in the dust,—
In agony sobbed, letting sink her
Plumes till they trailed in the dust,—
Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

I replied, "This is nothing but dreaming:
Let us on by this tremulous light!
Let us bathe in this crystalline light!
Its Sibylic splendor is beaming
With Hope and in Beauty to-night;
See! it flickers up the sky through the night!
Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,
And be sure it will lead us aright.
We safely may trust to a gleaming
That cannot but guide us aright,
Since it flickers up to heaven through the night."

Thus I pacified Psyche, and kissed her,
And tempted her out of her gloom,—
And conquered her scruples and gloom:
And we passed to the end of the vista,
But were stopped by the door of a tomb—
By the door of a legended tomb;
And I said, "What is written, sweet sister,
On the door of this legended tomb?"
She replied, "Ulalume!—Ulalume!—
'Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume!"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober
As the leaves that were crispèd and sere,—
As the leaves that were withering and sere:
And I cried, «It was surely October,—
On *this* very night of last year,
That I journeyed—I journeyed down here,—
That I brought a dread burden down here:
On this night, of all nights in the year,
Ah, what demon has tempted me here?
Well I know now this dim lake of Auber,
This misty mid-region of Weir,—
Well I know now this dank tarn of Auber,
This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.»

TO HELEN

HELEN, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicean barks of yore,
That gently o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary, wayworn wanderer bore
To his native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand!
The agate lamp within thy hand,
Ah! Psyche, from the regions which
Are Holy Land!

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